

BRITAIN'S BEST COMIC MAGAZINE

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ESCAPE

NUMBER 13

THE
HARD CORE
OF THE
BIG APPLE

ART SPIEGELMAN
GARY PANTER
JERRY MORIARTY
MARK BEYER

MEAN
STRIPS

by
JOHN BAGNALL
BRIAN BOLLAND
ANTONIO COSSU
BEN KATCHOR
WARREN PLESS
CHRIS REYNOLDS
RICH RICE
Plus KRAZY KAT

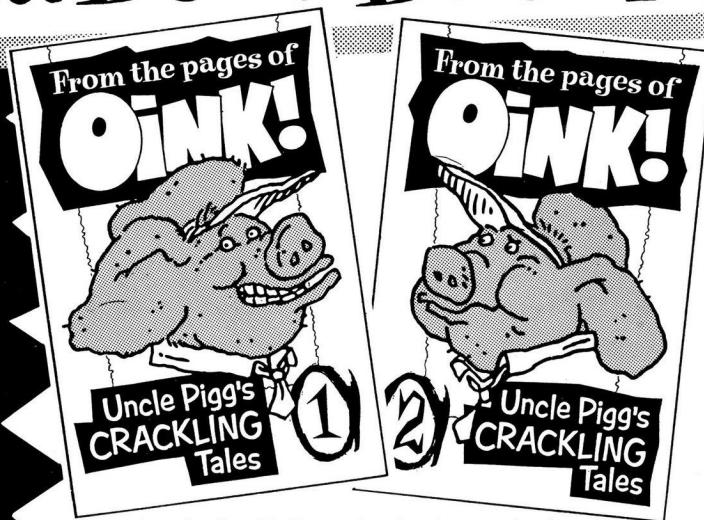
I
NY
WISH YOU WERE HERE!



From the pages of



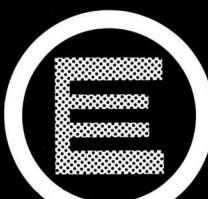
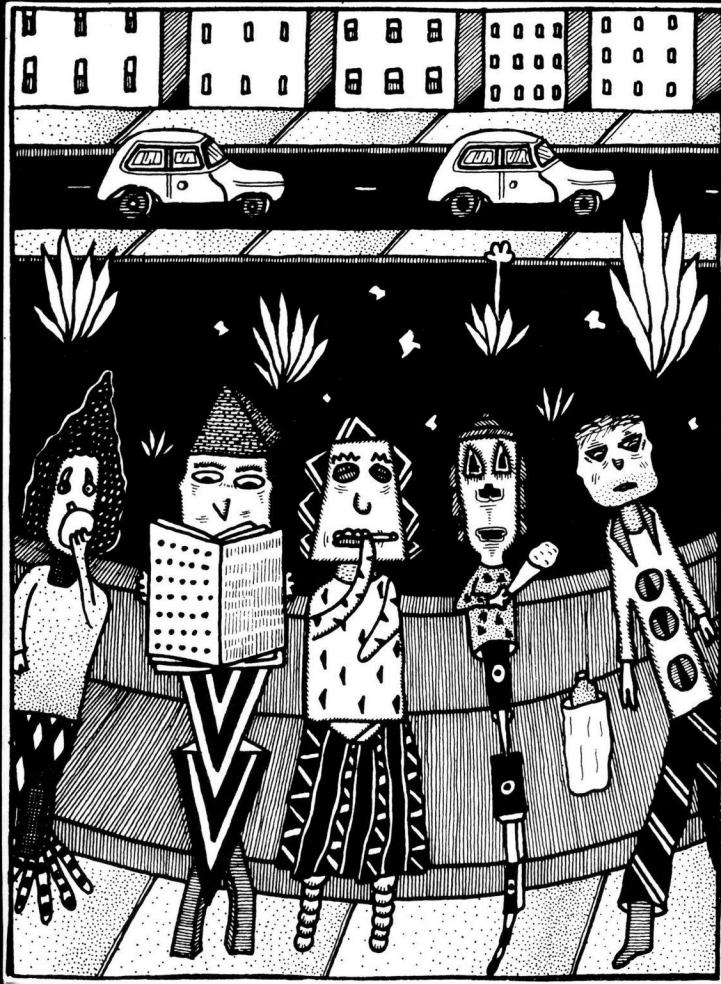
...Best Bacon!



For those of us who still find bottoms funny but who may not have been able to reach the relevant shelf in the bookshops, this current volume, containing as it does the very best of the material to be found within Oink's fortnightly pages, is indispensable. Roll up your sleeves, get your snouts down in the trough and enjoy it.

Alan Moore

KNOCKABOUT JESTER EDITIONS



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NEW YORKERS GRABBING LUNCH IN UNION SQUARE. Manhattan transformed through the eyes of psycho artist Mark Beyer. After a spell in Tokyo where he met his wife, Mark now lives in suburban Hackensack, New Jersey. In *Agony*, his latest tome with a groan, he plunges his principal characters Amy and Jordan into a blackly humorous spiralling labyrinth of fear and guilt, a sort of ragdoll 'Eraserhead'. See Reviews for a deft analysis of Mark Beyer, a 'Hieronymus Bosch for the Eighties'.



WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM: JOHN BAGNALL
MARTIN BARKER • LES COLEMAN • DAVE GIBBONS
BOB LYNCH • TREVS PHOENIX • ED PINSENT • PETER
STANBURY • DAVE THORPE • MIKE WOOLF



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ARTICLES

EDITED BY LOUISE TUCKER

1 Quick Watson, the Rathbone! A fiend lurks in Limehouse! A mysterious figure known only by his calling card *The Yellow Mark* – though it still sounds more exciting in the French as *La Marque jaune* – is cornered among the giant cranes and gantries which loom out of the fog in London's sinister docklands, tracked down by Captain Blake, the stiff upper lip of MI5, and his advisor Professor Mortimer. This Belgian bande dessinée album, which was contemporary in the Fifties, was Edgar P. Jacobs' finest hour.

The Black Island is a fascinating exhibition named after Hergé's adventure set in Scotland. It coincides with *La Marque jaune*'s long-overdue release in English and this re-issue of a French LP version. The exhibition is about how the French and Belgians see the British in their comics, and shows how anglophile artists such as Hergé, Jacobs, Bob de Moor, Floc'h & Rivière and Bilal have been inspired by the films of directors such as Basil Dearden, the Sherlock Holmes movies with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce, Agatha Christie novels and the like.

From March 3rd till May at the French Institute, 17 Queenberry Place, London SW7, with videos and lectures. An illustrated catalogue produced by Escape will support the show. God Save The Queen! – PS

2 "Well, blow me down! If ya click down me arm, a light ackkerly pops up outta me pipe! Arf! Arf!" An ingenious Japanese Popeye lighter from Argon, Neal Street, London, £18.95.

3 "Ho-mer? Oh, Ho-mer?" Tex Avery's lovesick flea hops into your living room on this new MGM video, *What Price Freedom*, containing seven Avery gems.

4 Storm warning! A day in the life of Don Lawrence, painterly illustrator of the classic *Trigan Empire* and now the European fantasy hit *Storm*, shows how he crafts his pages on this well-made and revealing video portrait by Dominic Dyson, £22 from Photon.

5 Guerrilla Graphists of the World unite in a magnificent mind-expanding double-double issue of Peter Dako's *Casual Casual Magazine*. This two hundred page rollercoaster of comix 'n' graphix serves as an indispensable Global Style Reader, crammed with cartoons, bios, photos, and as a catalogue for the *Casual Casual Cultural Exchange* travelling exhibition. This took off last summer in Toronto, touched down in Montreal and Paris, next

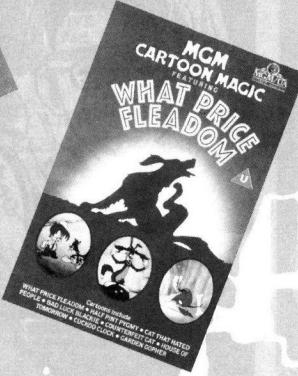


BACKGROUND ILLUSTRATION BY JACQUES TARDI

5



3



6



stop Tokyo. It cries out to be staged here – until it is, explore this eyeball exocet. \$20.00 (plus \$2.00 from Europe) from: *Casual Casual*, 698A Queen Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6J 1E7.

6 Handmade by French model makers Marie LeBlon and Eric Delienne, this fibreglass sculpture of Thomson & Thompson in their swimwear (£210) is one of their limited edition Tintin pieces. Since 1958, Hergé's eternal boyscout has sold more than twenty million copies in Britain but there's never been an English book to dig deeper into how the stories came about. Until now, with the translation of Philippe Goddin's sumptuous revealing volume *Hergé and Tintin Reporters*, just published by Sundance at £25. Early drawings, sketches, photos, unpublished pages, detailed commentary including Hergé's working methods and his widow's recollections, all this and more combine to make you want to re-read every adventure. The book and models are all available from the Tintin grotto Pilot, 34 Floral Street, London WC2.

7 Bake a cake, perhaps a Beef cake – this is Superman's 50th birthday year on terra firma after his Kryptonian rocket-ship crash-landed here in *Action Comics 1*, dated June 1938. Actually the Man of Steel had been conceived five years earlier, when two teenagers, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, spent the hot summer dreaming up the first Twentieth Century Super-Hero. Their hometown of Cleveland is the focus for a spate of special events, climaxing in an International Superman Exposition from June 16th to 19th. Official souvenirs include a limited edition of three porcelain plates with the legendary covers of the first *Action* and *Superman* comics, \$39.95 each or \$105.00 for the set from: Neverending Battle Inc., c/o 1422 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2001.

ON COURSE: So you want to be a cartoonist? In their search for the Brian Bolland of tomorrow, DC Comics have invested £10,000 to help set up and run a full-time Cartoon Centre in London in return for the first option on new graduates. Growing out of the weekly Workshops at the Portobello Project, the Centre opens in March with David 'V for Vendetta' Lloyd, John 'Kiss of Death' Watkiss and Arthur 'Danger Mouse' Ranson among the tutors. To enrol, sharpen your pencils and ring Amalia Redon on 01-221 4413.

ON SCREEN: In *Asterix in Britain*, France's funniest exposé of English eccentricities, Asterix and Obelix charge through their latest animated film, stomaching warm beer and boiled boar, opening April 1st. *Review*, BBC2's Arts show, visits the Asterix studios on March 31st to tie in with the film and the brand new album, *Asterix and the Magic Carpet*, now out from Hodder & Stoughton.

NATIVE NEW YORKERS



SO, MA & PA WEREN'T TOO SURPRISED WHEN I TURNED DOWN THAT ACCOUNTANCY JOB...



OF COURSE, THEY WERE BEHIND ME 100 %!!!



...I WAS GIVEN A WEEK TO SETTLE IN, BUT I JUST COULD-N'T WAIT. I GOT TO MY NEW JOB 3 DAYS EARLY...



...STILL MR. CLEFT DIDN'T SEEM TO MIND TOO MUCH.
SAID I COULD TAG ALONG WHILE HE WRAPPED UP A CASE...



I COULD TELL STRAIGHT AWAY THAT HE WASN'T TOO CONVENTIONAL



...BUT HE SURE HAD A WAY
WITH TRICKY SITUATIONS



CLIENT'S HUSBAND'S
BEEN PLAYING AROUND.
SHE WANTS HIM BACK
AT ALL COSTS...FOR
10 GRAND, WHO'S
ARGUING?!



...ON A LITTLE ERAND
FROM THE WIFE —
SEEMS SHE'S THE
JEALOUS TYPE...

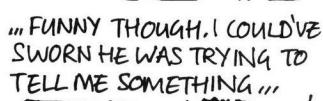
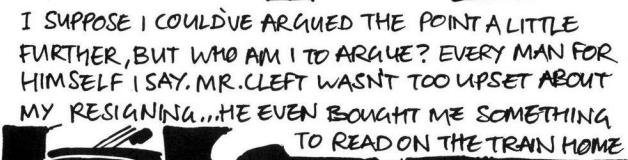
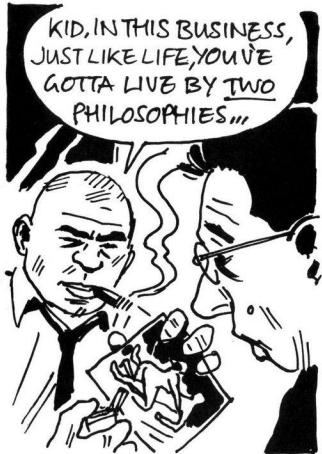
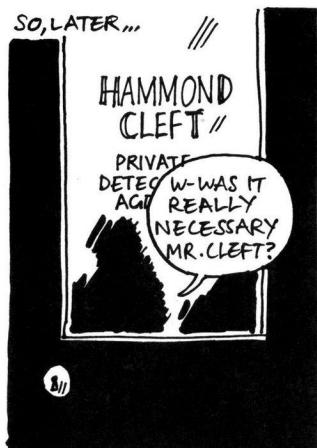
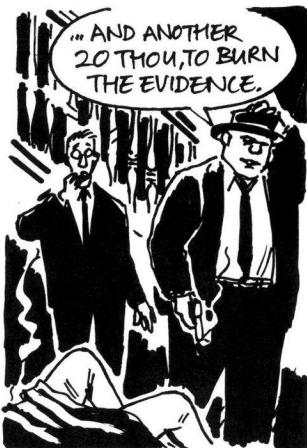


WHO WOULD'VE BELIEVED IT? MY VERY FIRST CASE, AND THE CITY'S MAYOR WAS FACING PUBLIC HUMILIATION...



...STILL AS WE DROVE BACK TO BREAK THE NEWS TO THE MAYORESS, I HAD A HUNCH SOMETHING WASN'T QUITE RIGHT!





• NERVOUS NIGHTLIFE

Seventh Avenue and 135th Street

Argentinian exiles José Muñoz and Carlos Sampayo had been creating their New York series *Joe's Bar* and *Alack Sinner* for several years, before they finally visited the city in 1981. Muñoz arrived ahead, left his bags in a locker at the bus station and started walking. 'I found a hotel filled half with foreign visitors, half with prostitutes, in a tough neighbourhood. If you'd not paid your bill, five minutes after midday they'd put a huge padlock device on your door. The next morning at 7.00 I started walking until 9.00 at night. I found the city was very similar to the city in my comics. I was breathing the same air as Alack Sinner.'

But Muñoz made a conscious decision not to let the real New York he was seeing for the first time control the personal vision of New York in his comics. 'I don't want to be real, I want to be emotionally real. I used my emotional impressions: pieces of sky I'd noticed, sharp between the buildings; and New York's electric atmosphere, different cultures and lack of cultures getting in touch and crossing over.'

Carlos Sampayo joined him a few days later. 'We went together to loads of jazz clubs, like Small's. He met all his favourites, like Freddie Hubbard. I remember a tap dancer in the dark, all you could see were his glittering shoes. Like some kind of dream.' O

• WHERE ART THOU?

Greene Street, SoHo

A short walk from the art galleries, a fourth-floor walk-up apartment in Greene Street

serves as family home, artist studio and headquarters for Art Spiegelman and Françoise Mouly's intense oversize comic magazine *Raw*. It was the surprise success of Françoise's annual SoHo Map that provided the seed money to start *Raw* in 1980. Meanwhile Art has worked as a consultant for Topps Bubble Gum, where he was one of the masterminds behind the *Garbage Pail Kids*, and as a comics teacher at the School of Visual Arts. Although a lot has changed in his life over the last year or so, with their first child Naja, and an international bestseller *Maus*, Art seems set to stay in the Big Apple.

'I'm a New York kid. In the Seventies, I moved out to San Francisco to get away from the dirt and madness. But after a few years, I suffered withdrawal and felt "the call of the wild". San Francisco was just too slow and civilised. They have a saying there: "Seven years makes a native". I lasted about five. When I got back to New York, I got culture shock at first, but now I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.'

Art isn't blind to the city's faults. 'It's not idyllic to bring up Naja. We took her to our nearest park, but this meant going through a trucking and warehousing district. Along the way we ran over a dead rat with the baby carriage.' The main thing that keeps Art here is the exciting collision of cultures. 'We're three blocks from Chinatown, five blocks from Little Italy. Other places seem homogenised, but there's such a variety of brains here. I like the fact that Manhattan is a small island off the coast of America. It has more in common with the rest of the world than with mainland America.'

• READ ALL ABOUT IT

Wall Street

The skylines, streets and sewers of New York have been not just a backdrop but a central character in Will Eisner's stories, from his film noir *Spirit* fables to his autobiographical novels like *The Building*. 'Cities are not tall buildings, but thousands of stories.' As a kid, he sold newspapers from a stand on Wall Street. 'My whole back-

• HAUNTED HOTEL

Avenue of the Americas and 44th Street

Sinister cartoonist Charles Addams, now 75, lives like a recluse in his posh penthouse

apartment, with a welcoming cast-iron vampire bat for a door-knocker and his treasured collection of antique weapons lining the walls. His morbid mirth first graced the pages of the cultured *New Yorker* in the Thirties, when the magazine's humorists lunched with the literati at the Algonquin Hotel on 44th Street. From several cartoon compilations, his gleefully gloomy horror-movie characters went on to worldwide fame via *The Addams* ▽

THE HARD CORE OF THE BIG APPLE

Tales of Manhattan

PUTTING NEW YORK CARTOONISTS ON THE MAP

By Paul Gravett

Illustration by John Watson

Family TV show. For this he finally got round to giving them names, like the vampire-woman Morticia. That was fun, though I had trouble with the little boy. I wanted to call him Pubert. The network said that was a dirty word, so I named him Pugsley, after a small river in the Bronx. As for Uncle Fester, I always figure he's me.' Addams is one of a dozen cartoonists on show at the Victoria & Albert Museum – in London that is – from May 11th to June 26th, as an exhibition of over a hundred *New Yorker* cartoons makes one European stop. O

• GHETTO BLASTER

Suffolk Street

Jack 'King' Kirby has been a fighter all his life. The sheer force and energy in his comics, from the Forties superpatriot *Captain America* to the Sixties Marvel renaissance and beyond, reflect his own drive to break out of Suffolk Street, the tough lower East Side ghetto of his childhood. 'It wasn't a pleasant place to grow up. Fights were the only way to get acquainted.' With Joe Simon in 1942, Kirby invented kid gang series like *The Newsboy Legion*, the comics equivalent of sidewalk and slum genre movies like *Ang-*

els With Dirty Faces. 'The city was my only experience. I knew all the kids in my comics; I'd grown up with them. I wore the baggy pants and the turtle neck sweater myself.' Kirby got out of the slums on the strength of his high speed action artwork but he's never been paid his dues. When Kirby got to grips with Marvel recently to get back his originals, he had to settle for a fraction of the classic pages due to him. The tough guy whose concepts built the Marvel empire has met his match, at least for now. O

• HITTING THE HEIGHTS

Brooklyn

Texas-boy Gary Panter moved from LA to Brooklyn Heights two years ago. Soon after, he landed the post as head designer on the *Pee-wee's Playhouse* show, nerdy comedian Pee-wee Herman's TV fun palace. Gary created the show's Emmy award-winning decor, praised in *Artforum* as '...the Sistine Chapel of nurseries', and Pee-wee's△

zany co-stars like Conky the robot, Jambi the genie and Chairry the chair, with his buddies Wayne White and Ric Heitzman. 'We're all art nuts, involved with Texas and Japanese aesthetics and primitive art, Cubism, Surrealism, Dada and Pop Art. We take all these cultures and smash them all together.' Panter is now designing a range of Pee-wee toys. 'I act as his consultant. Pee-wee insists on full control, so I design the toys and then a 3D model is made. I always thought I could do this as a kid and now I'm getting the chance.'

His other big project is a *Jimbo* book for Pantheon which includes a new twenty-page story that introduces his primal punk-a-billy to the mythic city of Dal-Tokyo. 'It's the idea of what if Dallas and Tokyo were the same place, it's about cultural confluence, a city combined from every city. New York is like Dal-Tokyo. It's very ambitious, bricks piled up high, steel stretching. You can't help recognising those dynamics and responding to them. New York tires me out though, so I spent some time recently driving in south Texas, seeing my folks. To relax here I play guitar or go out for pizza. I go to a great psychedelic record store, Rocks In Your Head, folk art exhibitions and bookstores like SohoZar'. The store puts out a magazine called *Zat* and Panter has edited a 'Go Naked' special of 'anything goes' graphic. Panter's happy here; even the seven inches of snow outside don't upset him. 'After nine years in Los Angeles, you can get tired of yet another perfect day.' O

• ON THE WATERFRONT

South Street Seaport

Parisian BD auteur Jacques Tardi has explored New York in several of his downbeat stories, notably *Cockroach Killer* by Benjamin Legrand, 'The Murderer of Hung' by his wife Dominique Grange and his own 'Manhattan'. 'The first time I went to New York, I'd been invited over by Marvel, who were interested in doing my heroine Adele Blanc-Sec. But they didn't want it set in *Belle Epoque*

ground is that of a city boy. I had no other place. This is what I was drawing on in my comics, what I had to start with.' His Jewish upbringing resurfaces in *Contract With God*, the first comic album to be translated into Yiddish, and his latest book, *A Life Force*, back in the Bronx tenements during the Depression. 'I remember sitting on a fire hydrant. I know this city from the seat of my pants.' O



IT WAS HIS PLEASURE, AT LUNCH TIME, TO TOY WITH THE DAY'S MOST ADVANCED POLITICAL IDEAS.

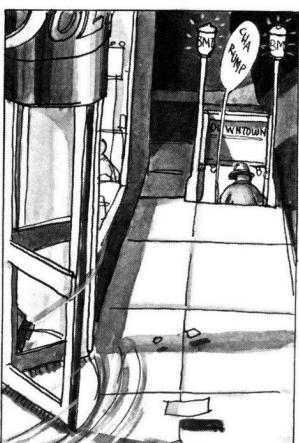
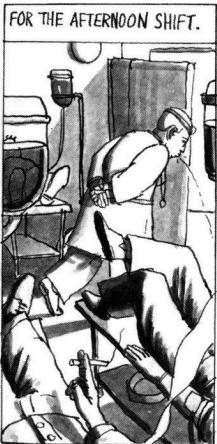


HE WOULD MEASURE THEM AGAINST CERTAIN RULES, SEE THEIR VALUE...



AND THEN GO BACK TO WORK.





THE NEXT DAY, A MAN...



WITH AN ELABORATE COIFFURE AND CARRYING A SMALL APPLIANCE...



WENT IN TO SELL A PINT OF BLOOD.



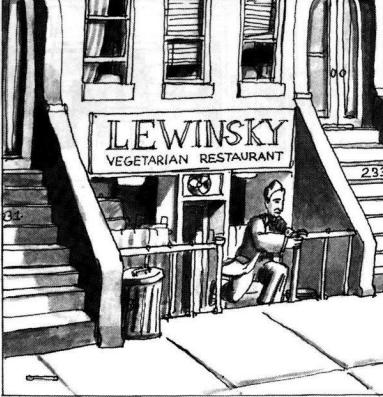
HE TOOK A LONG TIME SIGNING THE REGISTER



THE 'DOCTOR' HAD SEEN THIS MAN AROUND.



RUNNING UP AND DOWN THE STAIRS OF A CERTAIN RESTAURANT.



SELLING THINGS IN THE STREET.



WAITING IN LINE AT THE BARBER SCHOOL



BUT USUALLY IN THE PARK.



SOMETIMES TALKING TO A MAN WHO SMELLED OF THE ZOO.



JUST ANOTHER POOR MAN HE THOUGHT.



ONE MORNING, THE 'DOCTOR' CAME UP AN UNFAMILIAR EXIT.



AN ABSENTEE OWNER AND A SALESMAN PAID TO DO NOTHING.



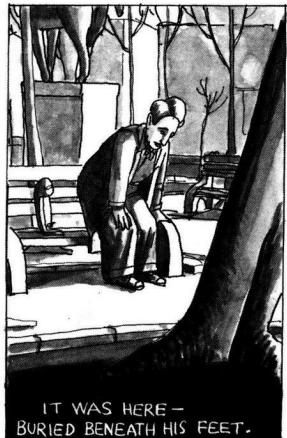
THE DISUSED BASEMENT STOCKROOM.



MYAKIS WAS ALREADY NEXT



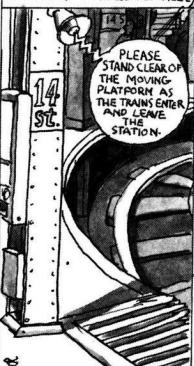
THEN CROSSED OVER TO THE PARK.



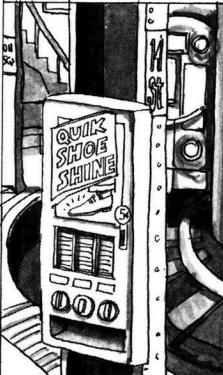
A USELESS CURVE BUILT, AT GREAT EXPENSE, INTO AN OTHERWISE STRAIGHT SUBWAY LINE.



TO AVOID GEOLOGICAL STRATA OF AN IMPERVIOUS NATURE. (HE IS NOT DELUDED INTELLECTUALLY)



IT AVOIDS NOTHING BUT THE EMPTY BASEMENT OF HIS OWN STORE.



OFTEN THE INSISTENT IDEA IS OF A TRIVIAL SORT, BUT IT MAY WEAR OUT THE PATIENT'S LIFE.)



THE IDEA THAT ALL OF THIS PUBLIC ACTIVITY REVOLVED AROUND HIS PRIVATE LIFE WAS A GRANDIOSE AND SAD ONE.

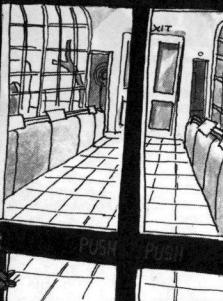


(MOST PEOPLE HAVE THE POTENTIALITY OF THIS DISEASE.)



THERE'S NO SENSE OF PAIN OR FEELING OF TERROR — EVEN THOUGH YOU KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING—

LION HOUSE



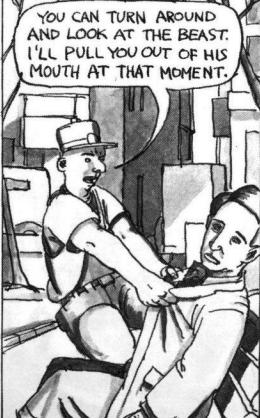
LIKE A PATIENT PARTIALLY UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF CHLOROFORM — THEY WATCH THE OPERATION BUT DON'T FEEL THE KNIFE.



IT'S NOT THE MENTAL PROCESS, IT IS JUST BEING SHAKEN. IT ANNIHILATES THE FEAR.



YOU CAN TURN AROUND AND LOOK AT THE BEAST. I'LL PULL YOU OUT OF HIS MOUTH AT THAT MOMENT.



AT LUNCH TIME, THE "DOCTOR" SEES MYAKIS IN THE PARK.



HE SEES MYAKIS HAND OVER A LARGE SUM OF MONEY.



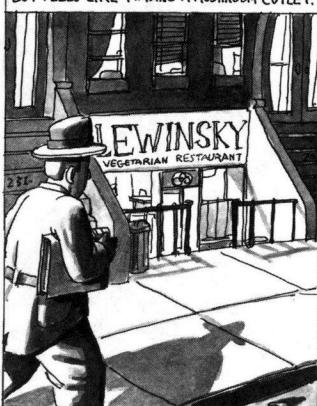
THE NEXT DAY HE DOESN'T SEE MYAKIS...



ANYWHERE.



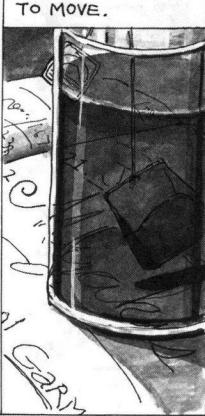
THAT NIGHT, HE STAYS TO DO THE BOOKS BUT FEELS LIKE HAVING A MUSHROOM CUTLET.



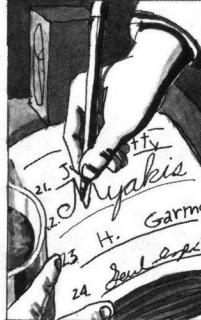
HE WORKS WHILE HE EATS.



THE BAG APPEARS TO MOVE.



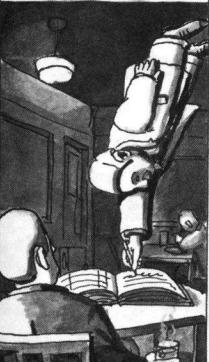
LOOKING AT THE DAMP SIGNATURE, HE RECOLLECTS A PEN IN THE AUTHOR'S HAND TRACING OUT THE LETTERS.



AND THEN IMAGINES AN UNDULATING ARM AND SHOULDER.



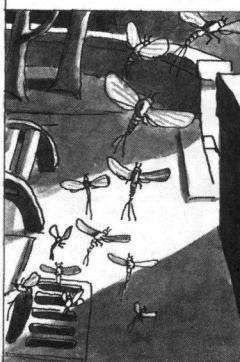
AND SO, PIECE BY PIECE RECALLS THE ENTIRE MAN —



SWAYING ABOVE THE TABLE AS THE PEN FOLLOWS THE INTRICATE CURVES OF THE SIGNATURE.



ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PARK, A SWARM OF INSECTS ARE ATTRACTED



TO A BRIGHT NEON SIGN.



MEET ALL YOUR HEROES AT FANTASY WORLD!



A shop with a difference. Our two floors stock American and British Science Fiction paperbacks, Role Playing games, Dungeons & Dragons, Runequest etc. Comics: Marvel, DC, Undergrounds, Dr Who, 2000 A.D. (current, plus back issues) etc. plus Records Posters, Film stills, Fantasy art books, T-shirts, Freak Brothers, Thunderbirds, Rock, Honourous, Rude, etc. Imported Film magazines, Rock & Pop books, also Badges, Patches, Photos, Jewellery, Martial Art

magazines, including Bruce Lee section. Also magazines on Boxing, Muscle & Fitness, Computers, Tarot Cards, Post Cards on the unusual and bizarre, plus much more.

Fantasy World is open Mon-Sat from 10.00 am to 5.30 pm and is easily located in the middle of Hanley City Centre at 10 Market Square Arcade. The entrance and escalator up to Fantasy World is in Lamb Street opposite Lewis's.



10 Market Square Arcade, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 1NU. Tel: 0782 279294

JERRY loves JAZZ

Interview by Paul Gravett

West 28th Street. Tin Pan Alley. When the music publishers sold their songs here, house musicians or pluggers, like the young George Gershwin, used to play medleys that filled the street.

Today the music's faded here and the songbooks have moved further up the Great White Way, but strains of a jazz saxophone still drift from a high window. In this attic apartment, high above the exhaust fumes, lives Jerry Moriarty.

Jerry moved here in '65 because the rents were cheap ('but not any more'). He's chosen an uncomplicated life. He has only two keys, one for the mailbox, one for the front door, and he doesn't go out to see any movies. The loft is cluttered with pulps, comics, Nancy dolls and the past, plus two cats called Flesh and Flyface, offspring of a stray that fell in through the ceiling. Painter, illustrator, teacher and closet comic artist, Jerry secretly turned his memories of his father into subtle pictures of middle America, into 'Jack Survives'. Jerry sits in his wicker wheelchair, eating peanut butter cookies.



I PLAY THE SAXOPHONE, BADLY BUT WITH FANATICISM. I love being an amateur, that's an English tradition I think. I was an amateur comic artist too, still am. For me jazz in its purest form is a synthesis of entertainment and art, just like comics. When jazz becomes art, it becomes unsatisfactory classical music, it loses its power. When it becomes entertainment too much, it becomes crossover or fusion, bland cocktail lounges. But when jazz lives in that very small space between art and entertainment, it's sublime, it's just itself. It's the same with comics.

I'm a free jazz freak, I like the idea of jazz not as a schematic thing to be read, but as improvisation, like Ornette Coleman. So when I'm making pictures, I try to let go. I don't lose control, I just relinquish it so I'm off-balance. I try to improvise when I draw, using layer after layer of white acrylic paint to take out the black that doesn't work. That comes from my background as a painter.

Did your father encourage you to paint?

Yes, Jack brought home pencils and paper for me from his office in the telephone company. For a canvas he'd take the cardboard from laundered shirts and cover them with white enamel. I used to paint in the basement of our home in working-class Binghamton, New York. He'd stand really quietly behind me when I was painting and matter-of-factly say, 'What do you think, Jerry, a little red over there?' And I'd say, 'Oh yeah!' I'd do anything to please him. He was my first art director. He'd be very supportive but he wouldn't know what to say.

What was his background?

He was in an orphanage as a kid and was brought up by an aunt. He got the equivalent of an eighth grade education, which is not uncommon for that generation born 1900. But there was a sensitive side to him and in later years he'd sit around listening to light classical music. It was a big move for his background. He had that sensitive part of his nature but he was in man's world. In my comics, he goes into a bar and some guys are talking about hunting. One of them asks him if he hunts, and Jack says 'Sorta! Because he wants to be there but he can't kill animals. Jack takes both aspects on. I see that as an interesting conflict.

I was fifteen when my father died in 1953, so I didn't have a man's experience with my father, I never had a beer in a bar with



If Nancy's friend, SLUGGO . . .



THE SPITTING IMAGE OF NANCY AND SLUGGO,
SATIRISED IN MAD MAGAZINE BY WALLY 'BRUSHFILLER' WOOD

him. Times were changing for him. He was limited in his job, because he didn't have a college education. He was realising all his limitations. He tried to join up in World War 2 but they said, 'No Jack, you got four kids!'. He was forty one years old and he wanted to get away from home and have his last adventures. Here's a guy who had certain values that had grown outdated. But he would never have been philosophical about it. Things might happen to him that were poignant or sad, but he wouldn't reflect so he wouldn't be hurt. He survives by not remembering.

When did you start 'Jack Survives'?

When I turned forty, the age of my father as I remember him, it turned out to be the right age to start the strips about him. The situations I chose — losing his wallet or getting tangled up in a dog's leash — were based on my own life, as well as how I'd respond. But then, I talk and think like Jack. I am him. I feel like Jack in this time. Like Jack being caught in his old values, knowing they're not right but he can't abandon them because there too much a part of him. I'm the kid who went to the movie house in the Forties and saw all the serials, the cowboy films and got the message, but, even though I know the message is fucked up, I never left the movie house.

How do your family feel about the strips?

I got a good letter from my sister. She was so moved when she opened my Raw book to see the big picture of Jack, she started to cry. She wrote later that she knew I wasn't using Dad; in a sense I was honouring him, he continues on through me.

You work a lot from memory?

Yes. As you see if you look around you, I don't live in a modern home! What does a house look like? All I can do is think of houses I've been in, old family houses. I'm just recalling what I know. I need glasses to read but drawing is the one thing I won't wear my glasses for, because I can keep my younger eyes and be more relaxed. I don't dare go to art shows, because my brain is like a sneaky sponge. When I teach at the School of Visual Arts, I need a day's brain erase before I can start working.

I know you're a big fan of Ernie Bushmiller's 'Nancy'.

Especially the Forties and Fifties ones. I used to check the paper and say, 'What dumb thing did she do now?', really contemptuous. Later I looked at it again and started liking its simplicity. Lots of people used to hate 'Nancy'. Wally Wood said that it was the kind of strip that, once you'd decided not to read it, you'd already read it! Those of us who like 'Nancy' take those criticisms as acclamations. It says 'We're right!'. I met another secret Nancy fan and we'd talk about the true mysteries of Nancy: how Sluggo, a nine year old boy, lives alone in this old house and how Nancy doesn't live with her mother, and who is this Fritz Ritz anyway?!

I talked to the great man himself, because I was asked to take

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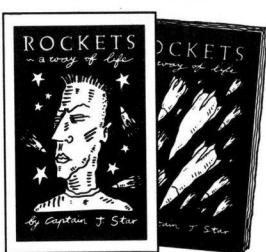
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'...TO MY HORROR, I SAW A WAITRESS CREEPING UP BEHIND THE CHINESE COOK. IN HER HAND A MEAT CLEAVER RAISED.' ONE OF MORIARTY'S SPREADS FROM *PICTURE STORY 2*

over the strip. Ernie sounded like a hitman. He had a voice like a trumpet player, like Miles Davies. I did some samples, a true old Forties style 'Nancy', but it didn't work out, thank God! Can you imagine those deadlines every day? Nancy today looks like Mussolini!

How did you become a magazine illustrator?

In my teens I took the 'Famous Artists' correspondence course and then majored in Illustration at college. I had a '39 Chevy coupé and wore peg pants and a one-button roll-coat, with big shoulders and my DA hair. As a student I was exposed to abstract expressionism, art that was all form and no content. So I began as an illustrator in the Sixties for Girle magazines like *Swank*, *Caper*, *Nugget* and *Escapade*, doing all this far-out looking stuff. Those of us doing the Girle magazines used to look down at the 'hacks' doing the Men's Adventure magazines. They'd have these surreal concepts like women in bras fighting Nazis, bizarre crazy stories. They were for the blue collar worker, so their content was very important. 'Don't give me this jive, give 'em straight stuff.' Those of us in the Girle magazines were the elite. I remember one Men's Adventure Illustrator was also a wrestler. The Wrestling Illustrator! It supported our notion that these were not aesthetic people here.

But now you're collecting these illustrations and doing your own in Picture Story Magazine.

Yes, I'm more interested in Men's Adventure stuff now because there's no pretensions, it does exactly what it's supposed to do and it's so surreal. So I started writing my own stories and illustrating them, with the whole story in one double page spread. They've got titles like 'The Insane Meter Man' and 'Killer Waitress'. Because these stories are meant to be the equivalent of the Men's Adventure magazines, I don't have to be a great writer.

I also drew Jack in posters for the School of Visual Arts on the subway. And he turned up on a T-shirt I drew for WFMU, a college radio station in Upsala, New Jersey. I've also been reading my Men's Adventure stories on that station. I call them 'Whispers Heard Through A Prison Wall'.

What's the appeal to you of doing comics?

They're art for strangers, art that goes out to people. They're an exhibition you visit by accident and we all own the pictures. You don't see the original, you take a copy into your home and you have an intimate physical relationship with it. As I have had with everything that's meant something to me. The value of my 'Jack Survives' strip is that it completes that cycle of intimacy.

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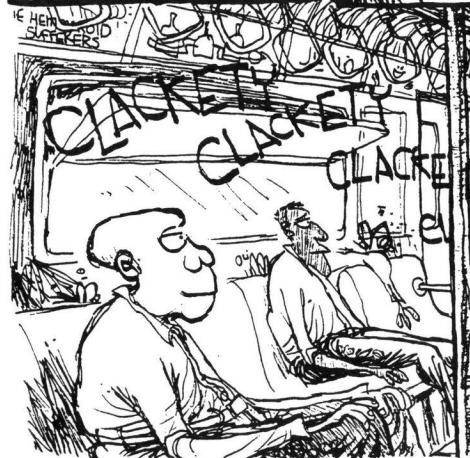
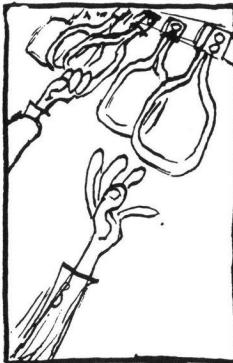


Bob, the alien, Rides the Subway

(and then gets off)

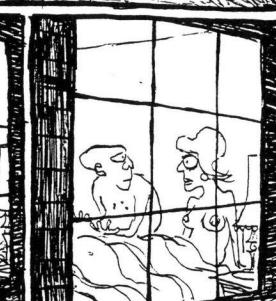
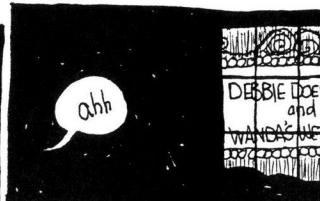
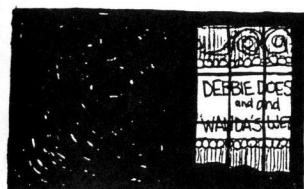
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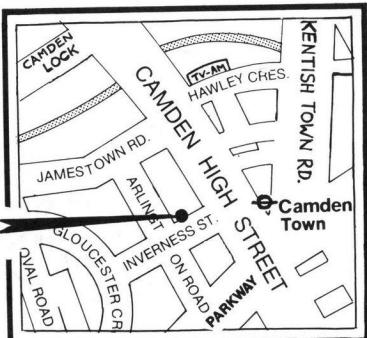
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THE NEXT BIG THING

THE JOKER DOESN'T work as a realistic character. In the early Bob Kane version, he was a brilliantly bizarre character who could not have really existed. He's the ideal nightmare villain for Batman, as they're both larger than life, and part of The Joker's appeal is that he was never explained.

But in *The Killing Joke*, Alan Moore and Brian Bolland try to explain away The Joker's psychosis, his whole raison d'être, as this failed comedian who just had a very bad day. It's an interesting starting point, to look at the similarities between The Joker and Batman and show how they have both gone through traumatic events and how their circumstances dictated what costume and persona they took on. But this explanation is too simplistic and only scrapes the surface, because The Joker lives that persona, whereas Batman can take his on and off. How often can someone trace their neuroses to one event? This is the worst kind of comic book device, used to re-write comics history to put a personal stamp on it.

In *Dark Knight*, Miller accepted the surface traits of The Joker: that he's obsessed with his smile, his black humour. So he had him appear on the Letterman show, poison Dr Ruth. Miller never tried to go beneath the surface, because he is aware that as soon as you do, it loses its appeal. Similarly in my

all-time favourite Batman story *Batman: Year One*, Miller explains part of the origin of Catwoman is that she likes cats; he also hints that she had some sort of martial arts training. He gives you just enough clues to satisfy you. You don't have to explain everything in a laboured way. You have to accept the basic premise that these people are going to wear silly costumes. That's the only stumbling block, if you're going to enjoy superhero comics. You don't need an excuse for that, or an elaborate explanation, otherwise you shouldn't be reading them. And maybe you shouldn't be writing and drawing them.

Brian's artwork is incredibly detailed and precise, every panel is almost a cover. But it's often stiff, especially on the fight scenes. There's none of the cinematic fluidity of Miller, in fact the layout almost fights against the action. And I give Batman the credit for being a lot more intelligent than some of this dime-store novel dialogue. Also, The Joker has never been so brutal, gunning down Commissioner Gordon's daughter. I found this gratuitous, even prurient, and I don't think it's necessary, especially with comics walking a fine line with the risk of bringing some unpleasant censorship down on themselves.

No, if you're looking for the next *Dark Knight*, pick up *Batman: Year One*.

—Jonathan Ross

AS THINGS GET OLDER, they start to accumulate weight; they gather cultural and emotional baggage. You expect more of them. And you can't see them on their own — you see them with whatever associations they carry. Batman isn't just Batman; he's fifty years of *Batman*, and the TV series, and *Dark Knight*, and God knows what... The Joker isn't simply the Joker. He's every Joker from Bob Kane's and Dick Sprang's through to Marshall Rogers' and Frank

Miller's, not forgetting Cesare Romero's.

Come to that, Alan Moore isn't just any comics writer, any more than Brian Bolland is just some comics artist. They bring cultural baggage and context along with them. Which means that you can't take *The Killing Joke* on its own; you have to put it into context. This is helped by the fact that Moore contextualises as he goes. The Batcave contains a 'Bob Kane'-signed picture of the Bat-family circa 1955; pictures of

The Joker on a computer screen take us through Robinson, Rogers, Neal Adams, through to Bolland. Commissioner Gordon's scrapbooks show the cover to *Detective 27*. One may not be able to believe in these characters as real people, but one can believe in them as real comic characters. Thus Batman's initial discussion with The Joker is coloured by the knowledge of The Joker's eventual fate in *Dark Knight*.

Giving The Joker an origin is the kind of thing

REMEMBER? OHH, I WOULDN'T DO THAT! REMEMBERING'S DANGEROUS. I FIND THE PAST SUCH A WORRYING, ANXIOUS PLACE.

"THE PAST TENSE," I SUPPOSE YOU'D CALL IT. HA HA HA.



WHO'S The Joker?

Batman: The Killing Joke is being loud-hailed as the Bat-sensation of the year, but will it be? Does Bolland & Moore's exposé of The Joker deserve to follow Dark Knight up the rickety stairway to bestseller heaven? **JONATHAN ROSS**, soon to host Channel 4's *Incredibly Strange Film Show*, and **NEIL GAIMAN**, author of *Violent Cases*, put their cards on the table.

that outrages purists, but not even the most die-hard purist could be outraged by the origin given here. It's both consistent and illuminating, and shows that both Batman and The Joker are different sides of the same coin. The coin in question being *One Bad Day*.

The Killing Joke is violent, textured and precise. One feels that for Moore it's as much a swan song as *Watchmen* was, with many of the same devices. In the past I've sometimes felt Brian

Bolland was over-precise; here the artwork is close to perfect: hugely detailed, never cluttered. But this is The Joker's book. At the end of the day it's just one huge joke; an unpleasant joke, one that may leave a nasty taste in the mouth, but like all good jokes it says something about the human condition. And like all good jokes it colours the way you see things from here on out.

—Neil Gaiman

BATMAN: *The Killing Joke* from DC & Titan is on published in the UK May 27th

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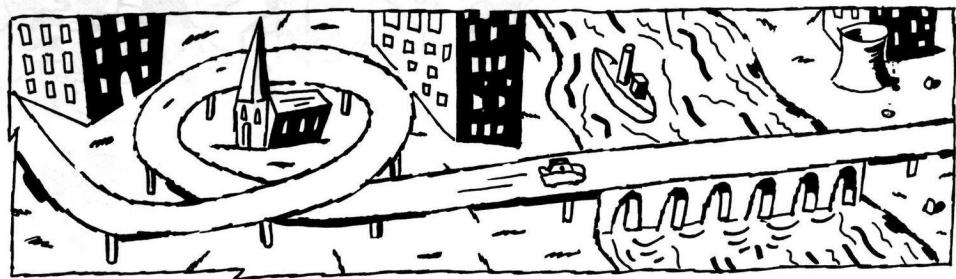
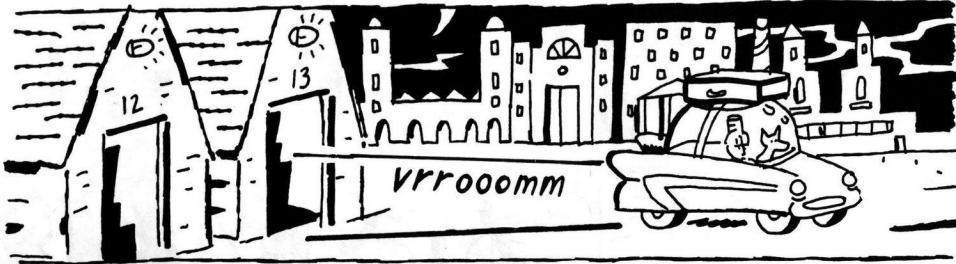
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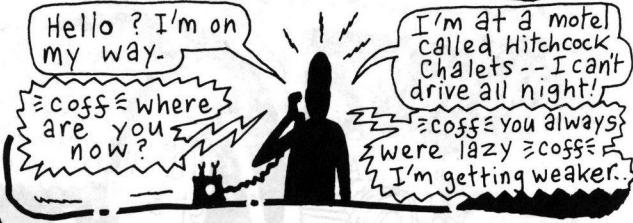
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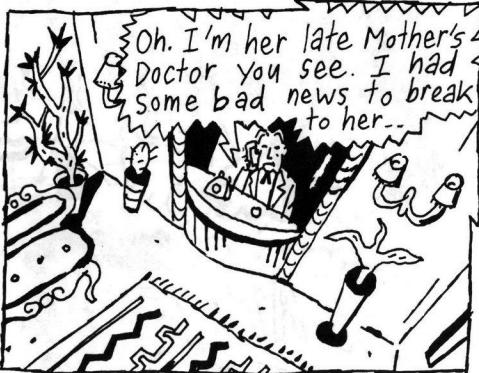
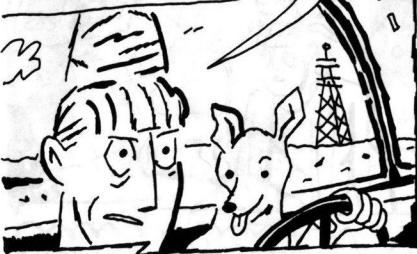




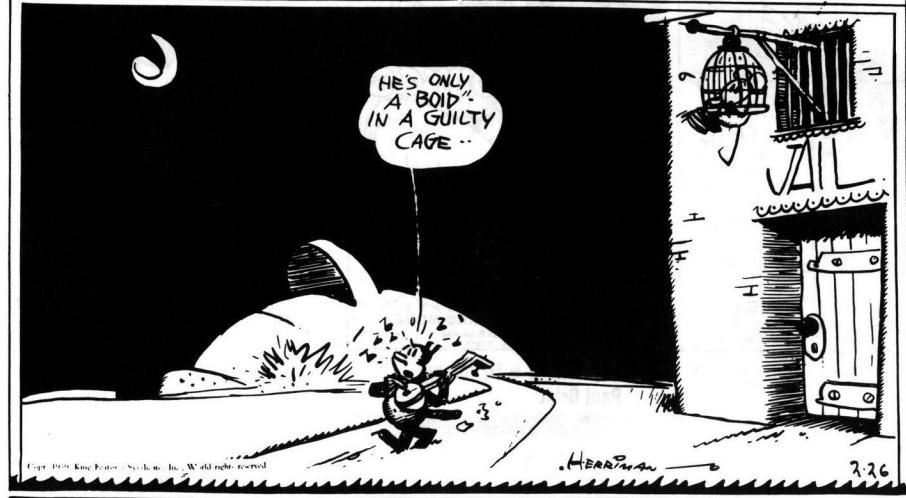


Hm--now I recall Mother's tried
this "unwell woman" trick before
--and it won't work this
time either!

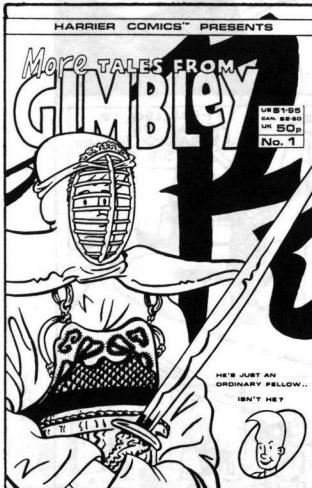
I'm not a slave any
longer! If I drive
fast I'll make it
back to town before
the office opens!



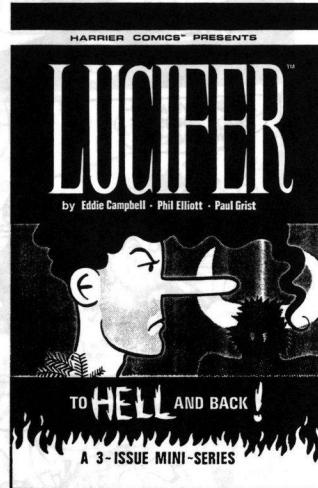
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OUTRAGEOUS TALES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Anne Thology

SAYS DAME JILL KNIGHT, falling-off-the-edge-of-the-right wing MP for Edgbaston: "...Obscene, revolting and degrading. It is the product of sick minds." So reported much of the Press when *Outrageous Tales* was published, just in time that it "...might end up in children's Christmas stockings", *The Sun*, 23 November 1987.

Let's take her seriously (I know it's hard, but try). This book takes episodes from the Old Testament and retells them, except that in this version the King James English is no longer allowed to obscure what is going on. When Samson "...saw an harlot and went in unto her" Judges, don't kid us that Samson didn't make a night of it. Or when God told the tribe of Benjamin to go and take wives from among the daughters of Shiloh, you don't think they just took them, do you? No, they 'took' them — you get the picture. And *you do* get the picture, of those poor women being raped into married bliss, in the name of the Lord.

Of course, Dame Jill is right. It is the product of sick minds. What is healthily sick about the whole thing is the way it subtly changes things, so that you get a full sense of what stories really meant. Some is just funny, like God telling Adam n'Eve to 'piss off' out of the garden. Others are more grim. I have childhood memories of being told at Sunday School what a good man Elisha was. He was a prophet, after all. So when some kids call him 'Baldy' and he summons she-bears out of the woods who tear them to pieces, how do you expect him to look afterwards? Shocked? Sublimely disinterested? No, he's pleased as hell.

It's the clash of Biblical language with revealing coarseness that hurts. Those pictures of Moses reading out all the 'Thou shalt nots' and his supporters gleefully enacting them, are sick alright. But it depends what you mean by 'sick'. Think of it like this. Our Jill is sick with it; "...the good artists' are sick of it, and what this book does is to demythologise like mad. Buy it quick before they ban it, 'cos they will if they can. It's not that *Outrageous Tales* takes the piss out of them. It takes them a little too seriously and thus it helps us see how sick are those who would fill our minds with this Old Testament stuff. Out of the mouths of Dames and bloodsuckers, as they say.

—Martin Barker

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FLESH AND FANTASY

THE MAGICIAN'S WIFE

Jerome Charyn and François Boucq

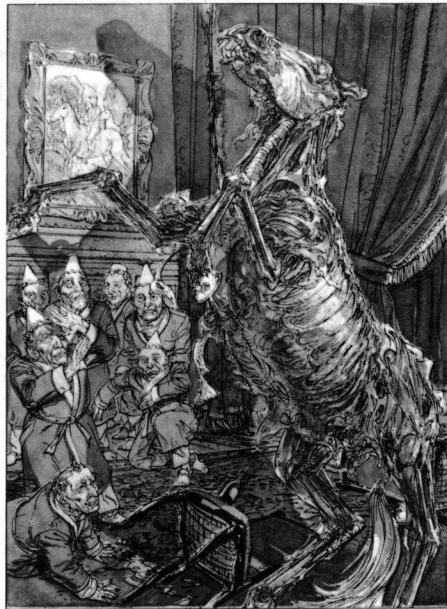
JEROME CHARYN IS AN INNOVATIVE New York novelist, arguably one of the most significant of this generation. He has persistently sought to undermine the notion of a gap between High Art and Popular Culture. His writing, particularly in the detective novels *The Isaac Quartet* (Zomba), has at times approximated the comic book form, in that it offers a version of urban experience which combines the harsh realism of city life with the transformations, both magical and spiritual, that are a recurring motif in the comic book he most admires, *Captain Marvel*.

This spirit of myth-making and transformation is also strong in his latest work, *Metropolis: New York as Myth, Marketplace and Magical Land* (Sphere). He presents Mayor Koch, for example, as a figure shaped by a synthesis of forces: political and social reality, the Jewish myth of the golem as a magical saviour, and the world of comic book transformations. The real Koch comes to be seen in a multi-coloured perspective, an amalgam of myth and fact which reveals the complex consciousness of Charyn's view of the world.

So it is not surprising that he should venture into the world of the comic book through the 'graphic novel', a synthesis of word and image. In Charyn's case, however, the graphic novel is not a wholly satisfactory form, unless it can re-create the shifting narrative perspectives that make his work so exciting and challenging. He has described his writing as 'a kind of dream-walking', transferring between real and quasi-surreal worlds. What Boucq's beautiful drawings inevitably do, however imaginative they may be, is present only one fixed perspective. They offer the reader a single lens, so that the movement between locations and between consciousnesses becomes too mechanical. An essential aspect of Charyn's importance as a novelist is the quality of his language and its freedom from conventional perspective, its strange synthesis of senses. This aspect is largely lost in *The Magician's Wife* because it is primarily a visual experience. Given Charyn's creative energy, it is disappointing that his words are confined mainly

to dialogue, not his strongest point, and that he has not expanded his commentary in captions.

With that said, this is still an interesting work as an example of a major novelist unafraid to cross the artificial barrier between art forms. The story is typical of Charyn's fiction. It combines fairy story strategies with a re-enactment of the werewolf myth, the whole filtered through an archetypal tale of loss, search and rediscovery. There is also a parody of the Hercule Poirot-type detective which becomes uncomfortably close to an absurd stereo-



type. The story is oddly unintense and its grotesqueries puzzle rather than disturb. The real value of this book is that it will make literary critics consider more carefully the graphic novel's marriage of word and image. For me though, the book is an uneasy synthesis. To experience Jerome Charyn's work at its most challenging and exciting, go read the novels, go read *Metropolis*.

—Mike Woolf

UK: Titan Books £8.95. US: Catalan \$14.95. 88pp Softback

Mike Woolf is the author of 'Exploding the Genre: The Crime Fiction of Jerome Charyn' in *American Crime Fiction: Studies in the Genre*, edited by Brian Docherty and published by Lumière-Macmillan, 1988.



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BUT SURELY THAT'S A
MATTER OF OPINION...





JOE'S BAR

Carlos Sampayo and José Muñoz

A BAR CAN BE THE MOST WELCOMING of places or the most uncaring, where a smile may be met by friendship and conversation or by a face full of glass. It's like a strange country, complete with its own laws and social structures, an unreal state through which we pass, our origin and destination unknown to the other temporary inhabitants, aliens all. Wherever it is, the atmosphere will be a cocktail of smoke, alcohol and laughter; depending on your tastes and circumstances, it could be an outpost of Heaven or a waiting room for Hell. But whatever it seems to be, a bar will always be just a stop on the way, never a destination. A bit like New York really. Or life.

Aptly enough, this *Joe's Bar* is to be found somewhere in New York, though not any New York that exists on this planet. It's the New York of the imagination, alternately bustlingly attractive and confusingly threatening, where we encounter a teeming throng of people, both bizarre and banal. Sometimes we catch snatches of their conversation, other times we stare blankly at each other. Once in a while we dare to follow them, to their homes or to their work and eavesdrop as they live, love, hope, despair. Or die.

The stories here are about transience and instability, disturbingly depicted in uncompromising chiaroscuro and fragmentary text. Muñoz and Sampayo are by all accounts experts on the unsettled life; both native Argentinians and political exiles from that country, they have separately wandered through Spain, England, Italy and Africa. Significantly though, at the time of creating *Joe's Bar*, neither had visited the USA. The book benefits greatly from their consequent use of New York as a metaphor, a phantasmagorical cosmopolis, which becomes more viscerally real than actuality would ever allow. Their insights are coupled with an equally experienced craftsmanship that, liberated from hard labour in mainstream publishing, allows them to communicate their passions with extraordinary directness.

There are no easy resolutions here, no satisfying story twists to comfort us. This is the hard stuff – strong, intoxicating and addictive. Call in at Joe's and have a few.

–Dave Gibbons



LIVER CROMWELL DEFEATED Charles I in 1645 at the battle of Naseby and was on the road to instituting a Puritan Republic in England. The popular basis for this change was both the drive for democratic socialism desired by the vast majority of the people of England, who wanted, through the progressive ideology of the Levellers and Diggers, to institute a full parliamentary democracy or even abolish private property altogether, and also the rise of a landed capitalist bourgeoisie. Both, for their own reasons, resented the dictator by 'divine right' of the monarchy.

Cromwell, once in power, turned out to be just as cruel a tyrant as any monarch, betraying by their murder those who had put him in power, abolishing parliament and crushing the hopes of the majority of the population. After his death in 1660, Charles II was returned to the throne, but by now the landowneruppies of their time had much more power because trade, property and tax laws were in their favour. The conditions for the growth of modern capitalism were thus almost unwittingly established by the English Revolution.

In this second volume of the *Arkwright* trilogy, Bryan concentrates on a parallel Earth where the monarchy was never restored, so that full capitalist progress and industrial expansion never developed. Instead there has been stagnation and repression for three hundred years. This book addresses important questions of English history, culture and power.

The *Arkwright* trilogy is by any standards destined to be an impressive achievement in British comics. Conceived, plotted and drawn by the visionary Bryan Talbot, it stands as a link between the preoccupations of *Nemesis* – the psychology of fascism – and those in his Seventies' work, particularly 'The Psychedelic Alchemist' for *Brains-*

ton Comics.

The artwork, meticulous and occasionally



PAST MASTER

LUTHER ARKWRIGHT: TRANSFIGURATION

Bryan Talbot

stunning, serves an equally meticulously researched and plotted story-line. Arkwright is an agent of a group on Earth Parallel Zero Zero, waging a cosmic multi-dimensional battle with the Disruptors, who seek to instigate chaos across the parallels by bringing together two halves of the awesomely destructive 'Fire Opal'. In the volume, the backdrop of the story is hardly touched upon, and instead the messianic, New Age, cosmic consciousness of Arkwright is set against the utter depravity of the tyrant Cromwell. Arkwright must defeat him, for the purposes of some unspecified plan, which will also frustrate the entirely different aims of the Disruptors. To do so, Arkwright allies himself with the forces against Cromwell, which happen to be Roy-

alsists. This is the ingredient readers may find hard to swallow, mostly because it does not ring true, either with our history or with Luther's own progressive principles. Luther's Royalist friend Fairfax is a descendant of Thomas Fairfax, the landowner general who supported Cromwell and later the restored monarchy. Luther's friends might more suitably have been the descendants of Robert Lilburne or Gerrard Winstanley, the libertarian leaders of the popular revolution. The monarchy had very few supporters among English commoners, contrary to Bryan's portrayal.

However, this series is, after all, an *Illuminated* natus in comics format and therefore its structure is like a Chinese box. Who knows what revelations Book Three will hold? With all this current trendy marketing nonsense about the 'graphic novel' being a 'new' phenomenon, this grand cycle defines new boundaries for what a specifically British variant of the graphic novel format can achieve; in this case a discussion of the nature of our own history and culture.

–Dave Thorpe

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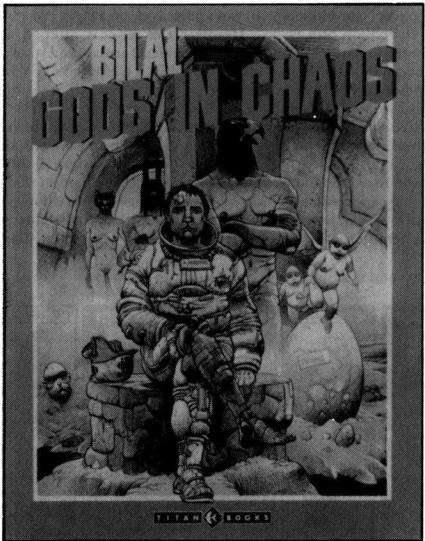
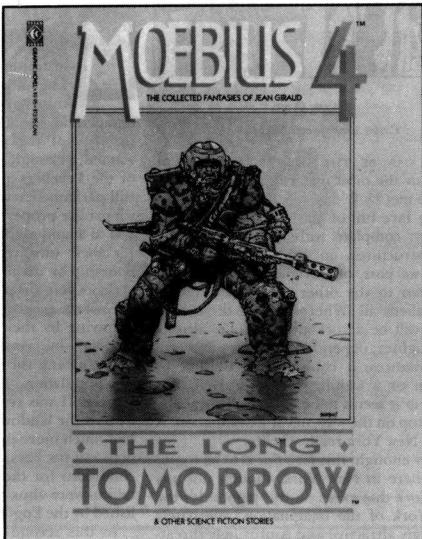
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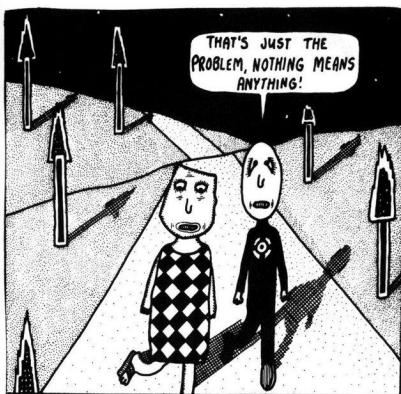
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AGONY

Mark Beyer



IN A WORLD INCREASINGLY GOVERNED by technology and a media use that often trades off people's fear, most of us experience moments when we resurrect aspects of our personality that relate to childhood fear and anxiety. Since Mark Beyer's appearances in *Archie* in the mid-Seventies, his comic strips have been inhabited by a collection of characters who, in psychological terms, represent adult children who have reverted to early feelings of insecurity, aggression and alienation.

Two self-published mini-comics, *Death and Amy and Jordan at Beach Lake*, set the atmosphere of Beyer's genre from the beginning. He continued the pessimistic narrative in two larger collections, *A Disturbing Evening* (1978) and *Dead Stories* (1982). *Agony*, his latest offering, is an extended adventure into the nightmare world of Amy Tildsley and Jordan Levine, two of his principal characters. In a five inch square format the book devotes a single panel to each page, giving a sharper focus to his distinctive graphic style. His use of an anarchic perspective, combining axonomic projection with several incoherent vanishing points, displays an affinity with the metaphysical paintings of Giorgio de Chirico; both explore an agitated perspective to heighten the drama. Beyer's deliberately undeveloped syntax renders speech patterns to a childlike directness, often incapable of encompassing abstract concepts. Language is used to engage fantasy, feelings and simple information. Time and place are imprecisely defined, and even Amy and Jordan's relationship appears not to be fixed. In one story Jordan is referred to as Amy's lover, while in another he has come back from school and they seem to have a mother-son relationship.

Like his predecessor of the 'high' underground Rori Hayes, Beyer's black humour often involves his creatures in aspects of human subterfuge to threaten the vulnerable and paranoid Amy and Jordan. Their sense of persecution is increased by an impoverished environment, making it impossible for them to relax, a desire which at times seems almost pathological.

Dark forces at work, beyond their control, trap them in a claustrophobic panic.

Agony starts with an overwhelming sense of despair and characteristically stays there. It opens with Amy and Jordan losing their jobs, their frustration leads to argument. They are plagued by physical violence in their search for work and Amy's head is torn from her body by a ghoul. The ghoul then runs off to an aquarium and feeds Amy's head to a large fish. Jordan's reaction is to save his friend, but in the process has his legs bitten off by the fish and is then swallowed himself. Fortunately they are rescued by aquarium staff and fitted back together at the hospital.

In a pictorial world, it is possible to examine human trauma. When asked about the violence in his strips, Beyer explained, 'It's psychological, so abstract — to me anyway. I deliberately show the characters getting killed and then in the next story they come back to life. It's the psychological violence of what people do to each other.' So his intent is a metaphoric one. Although one is left wondering at the indestructible quality of Amy and Jordan, one is aware that it is indispensable to their conception. Their ability to survive such a series of outrages is like James Bond, as our fictional anti-heroes have to live to see another day.

The sense of intrusion upon the lives of Beyer's characters manifests a desire in them to be elsewhere, to hide from the authorities who invariably are harmless. Unidentified authority is far more threatening as a result of its hidden impenetrable position. Once again we are reduced to being defenceless children by society's corporate machinery. As in the writings of Franz Kafka, the subjects are reduced to a sense of unqualified guilt so they remain haunted by their very existence. The remorseless quality of *Agony* refuses to let us escape. The bogeyman will never go away. Ahhhhhh!

—Les Coleman

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CRITICAL LIST

BLACKHAWK

DC

A mess. Nifty artwork, but Howard Chaykin's storytelling has apparently advanced from sophistication into premature senility. The *Blackhawk* cast is unrecognisable under his now standard mélange of gods and blowjobs. And the plot? Persevere. Sit down in a comfy armchair with a drink and some peace and quiet and you'll find it eventually. (What do editors do at DC?) —TP

DEATH OF GROO

Marvel

Those wacky wielders of wonderment, Mark Evanier and Sergio Aragones, deliver an epic novel, in which Groo encounters his death, the fearsome Flook-Flook and the love of a good woman. The usual 'Conan Meets the Three Stooges'-type tale, told with their sure numbers touch. Read this, or be a mendicant. —BL

SINISTER ROMANCE 1

Harper

Individual stories are well constructed and drawn. Trev Phoenix gives one of his best, packed with nifty one-liners; Warren Pleece's strip is a technical masterpiece. Glenn Dakin's 'Isis Syndrome' disappoints, trying to adopt genres like Sixties *Archie* and *Scooter* comics, which he's not entirely comfortable or conversant with. The whole package feels like a cocktail contrivance. Very little warmth, mainly irony and surface humour. Neither sinister nor romantic —EP

SPACE GHOST

Comics

Steve 'The Dude' Rude and Mark Evanier on a deluxe package which pits Space Ghost and his pals against all their deadliest foes and the Big Surprise Mystery Villain. Except that with one of the corniest plots known to Saturday Morning TV, it's not much of a surprise, unless you're six years old and have more pocket money than I had at your age. But since nostalgia's the name of the game, what the hey: it's a lush visual treat, so relax, regress and enjoy! —TP

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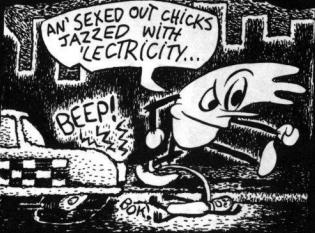
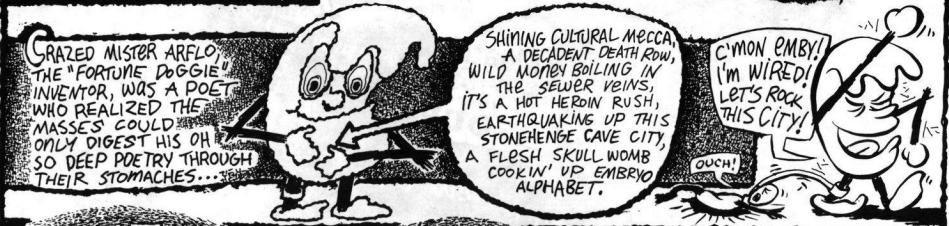
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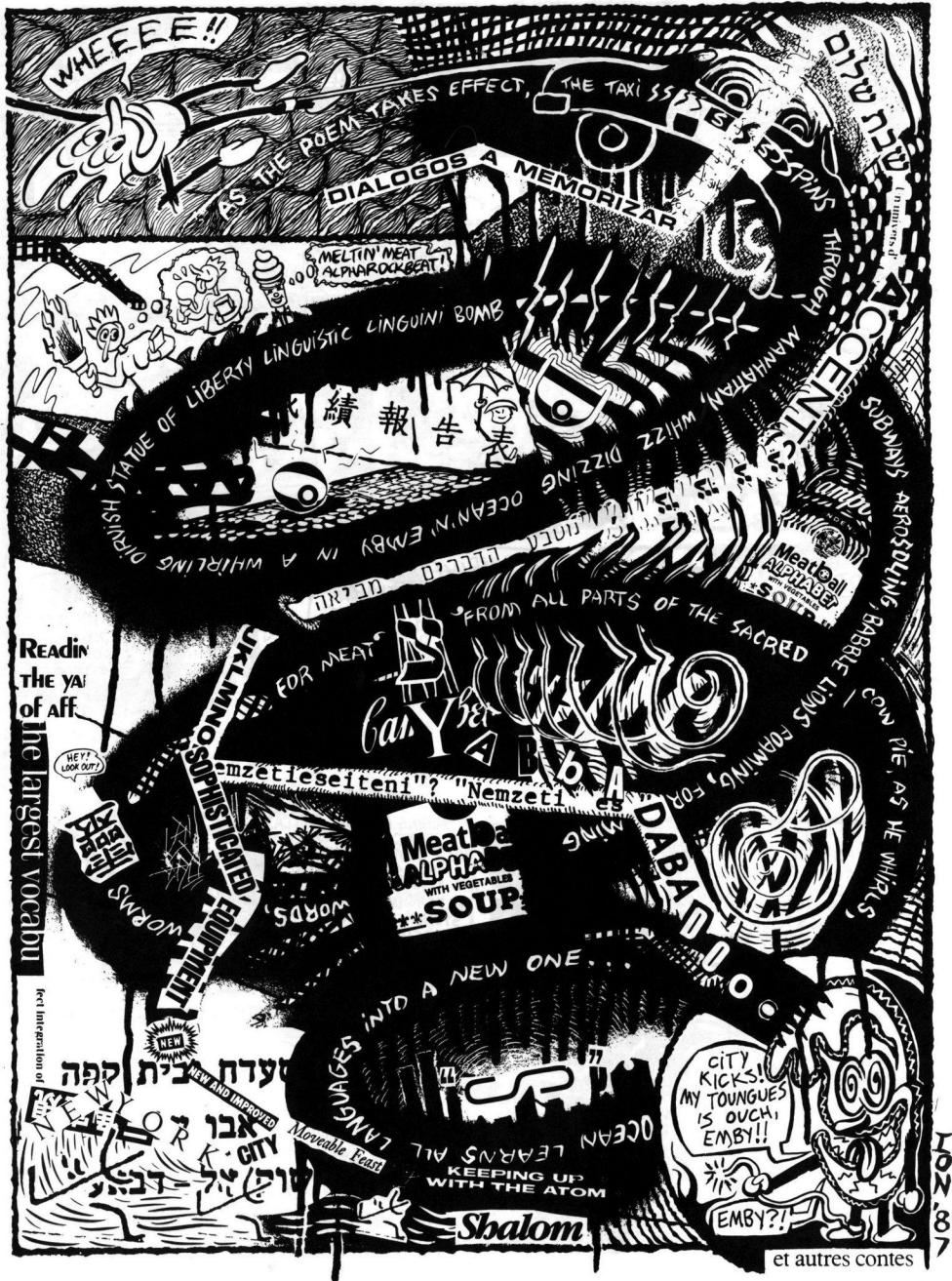
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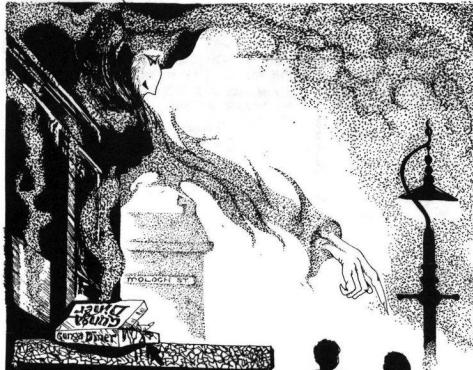
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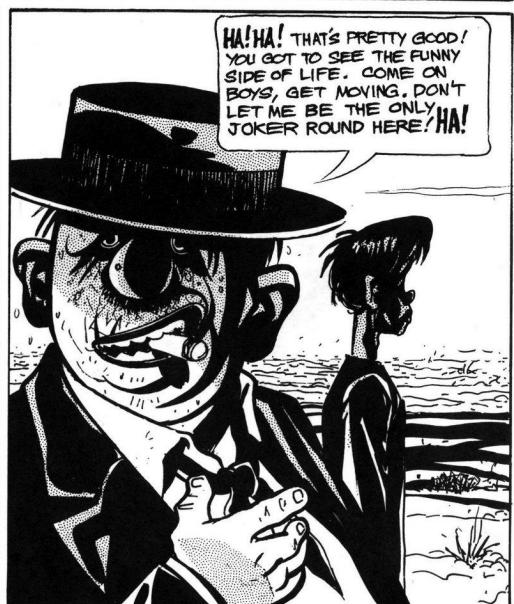
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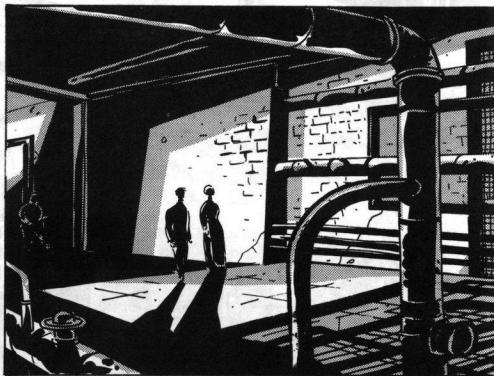




LETTERING BY TREV'S PHOENIX.









SUNDAY MATANAY

BY L.J. BARRY · STARRING HER LITTLE BROTHER MIKE.



ON SUNDAYS, DAD WOULD DROP US OFF AT "THE BARN" THEATER TO SEE A TRIPLE FEATURE SUCH AS "THE CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB", "DIE MONSTER DIE", AND "THE CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB."

WHILE MY BROTHER WAS BUYING AMMO (MOSTLY MILK DUDS), I LOOKED FOR A SEAT NEAR THE CUTE BOYS SO I COULD STARE AT THEM DURING THE MOVIE LIKE A MYSTERIOUS STRANGER OR GO OVER AND FAINT ON THEM DURING THE SCARY PARTS.



MY BROTHER HAD A WAY OF BECOMING THE HERO OF THE AUDIENCE, USUALLY THROUGH DEADLY AIM, WHICH HAD BEEN KNOWN TO BRING IN THE MANAGER.

HE HATED THE MUMMY BECAUSE IT WAS FAKEY AND COULDN'T DO NOTHING. ANYONE COULD RUN BEHIND THE MUMMY AND KICK IT IN THE BUTT. MY BROTHER'S SUGGESTION ON HOW TO IMPROVE THE MUMMY WAS, GIVE IT A DEADLY SMELL.



FINALLY WHEN IT WAS "THE END" AND IT WAS TIME TO GO WAIT OUTSIDE, MY BROTHER WOULD GET LOST AND I WOULD HAVE TO GO FIND HIM. USUALLY HE GOT TO BREAK SOMETHING BEFORE DAD CAME.



THE BEST PART OF THE DAY WAS THE RIDE HOME WHEN WE WERE ALLOWED ONE SOCK EACH BUT ONLY IN THE ARM.



end

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THE SMALL PRINT



THE FISH 5

Putting Birmingham on the comics culture map, Sparkbright spark spark James Hanlon is reeling in some prize catches in *The Fish*.

Martin Currie's 'Poison Shadow', about a suburban ninja assassin who stalks his victim to the local pub, is both satirical and vaguely chilling. post-Hungerford. There's the naive sophistication of Mark

Wilson's pages about a country cottage and things under the bed. James's own stories show real intelligence and wit, with deceptively simple drawings, not unlike

Glen Baxter, serving well-written deadpan narratives. His 'Popper's Shift' strips are now being animated on a new

computer system called Antics. 'We're trying to get away from the usual glossy cliché style and experiment with animating the text as well as the pictures.' *The Fish* is smartly packaged and deliberately avoids the 'bum, willy or farty' approach. Read in luxury. —PG

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SKATE MUTIES
FROM THE FIFTH
DIMENSION

Well gnarly! Not only has skateboarding injected new excitement into the thrash-punk scene, but it has inspired a fanzine to strike fear into the heart of all pedestrians.

Reading this packed digest is like a furious skate round the ramps (though as an armchair skater, this is pure

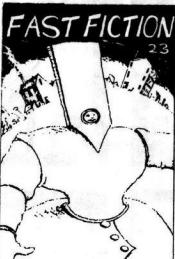
speculation). Local scene reports, skate-cartoons, funny clip-art, comics reviews, even a history of The Residents are crammed into the mutie-mix of biting humour and energy.

They also produce Mutie T-shirts, stickers'n'badges. Who says you can't buy instant street credibility? —JB

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FHE NEW BREED of self-published comics, the print equivalent of the Eighties' animation and Super 8 revivals, have always been hard to track down because of their limited print runs. To find the widest range, check out the Fast Fiction Service. This was innovated in August 1981 by Paul Gravett as the 'Rough Trade' of comics, to distribute independent comics from a stall at bi-monthly London Comic Marts and through the mail via regular Information Sheets. On the heels of the punk fanzine boom and the xerox revolution, a new generation of British comics artists were ready to do-it-themselves and self-publish their strips. Fast Fiction gave them their first outlet, meeting place and sense of unity.

With the advent of *Fast Fiction* magazine in 1982, a fresh approach to British comics anthologies was



born. It was started by Ian Wiecekorek and Phil Elliott as a showcase for new non-derivative cartoonists, eschewing Yankee superheroics in favour of a more personal identity. The first issue featured Ian and Phil along with Eddie Campbell. Shortly afterward it was joined by the early photocopy comics of Ed Pinten, Myra Hancock and Glenn Dakin. These were among the first generation to totally change the face of British comics. From number 12, present editor Ed Pinten consolidated the magazine's policies and kicked it into top gear. The young 'Pens and Pencils

COOL CRUSADER
CAPTAIN MAROON

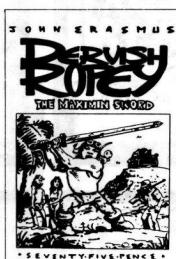
YOU'LL BE HEARING MORE about Harley Richardson in years to come, so better snap up his first solo book while it's still available. Raised mainly on superhero comics, Harley was inspired by Glenn Dakin and Steve Way's *Paris The Man of Plaster* to adopt a light-hearted approach to the genre, and attempt his first sustained stories; this is the result. A gentlemanly sort of costumed crime-fighter, Captain Maroon has a fairly laid-back attitude to his job, and can become quite irritable if

pressured to behave as a conventional hero should. His exact powers are unclear — Harley wisely avoids the juvenile gaffe of Secret-Origin-story nonsense — yet the Captain has no trouble overpowering his bizarre opponents in these hilarious episodes. Harley's chief strength is his comics fluency, his ability to construct a seamless narrative flow with uncluttered panels and a minimum of text. He's also blessed with an ear for sharp and witty dialogue, an ever-improving draw-

THE SECRET SERVICE
FAST FICTION

of the UK' that followed — like John Bagnall, Tim Budden, Chris Flewitt, Trevis Phoenix, Phil Laskey, and others — formed the next generation.

Through continual interaction and the ferment of ideas, dozens of cartoonists have published their own comics, more than a thousand different titles over the years. And it's not just history. Today, as Fast Fiction turns its seventh birthday, the cartoonists are as fevered and fertile as ever. John Erasmus with his well-crafted *Dervish Ropely* epic, Dominic Regan with his sterling *Captain Empire* series and Harley Richardsonson are just some of the many talented quilldrivers in



this latest generation. New anthologies like *Ginchy Gazette*, Issue 2, *The Fish*, *Atomic* and *Preview* have introduced the psychedelia of John Miller, the furore shocks of Tom Elmes, the film noir of Garry Marshall, the lunacy of Des Buckley. Now's the time! To read new comics on the cutting edge, contact the Fast Fiction Service.

—Peter Stanbury

For details of *Fast Fiction* magazine or a current information sheet—or if you're publishing your own comic or thinking about it—send an SAE to: Fast Fiction Service, 27 Bracewell Road, London, W10 6AF, or drop by the FF Table—next dates April 9th and June 4th—at the Central Hall, Westminster Fair.



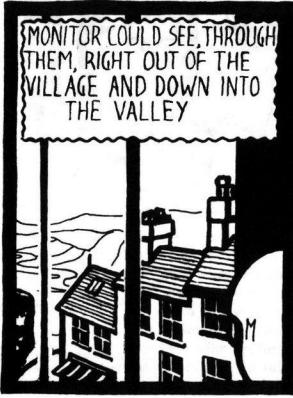
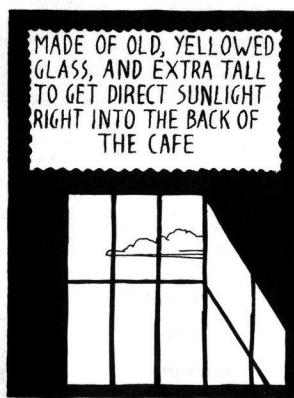
ing style, and he can render all sorts of expressions with ease and simplicity. These panels glow with warmth and life. Still only in his mid-teens, Harley already shows a lot of potential.

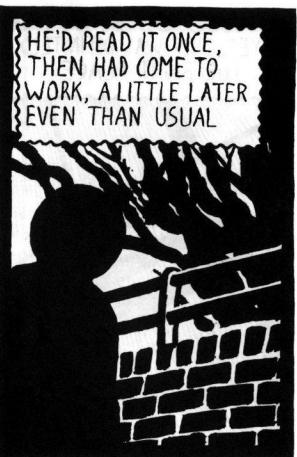
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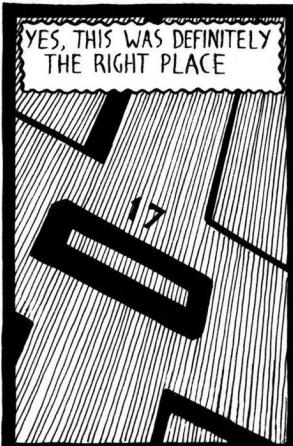
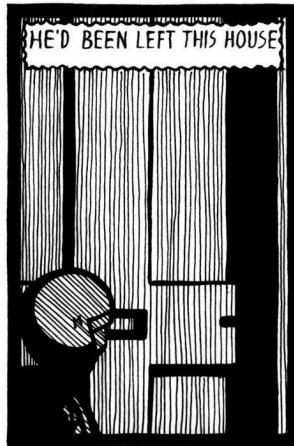
—The Stiletto

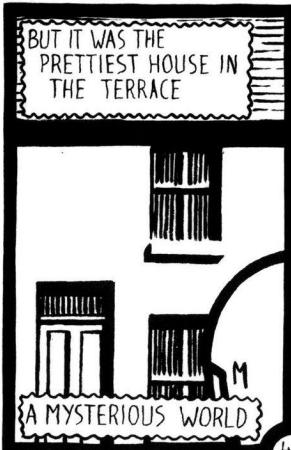
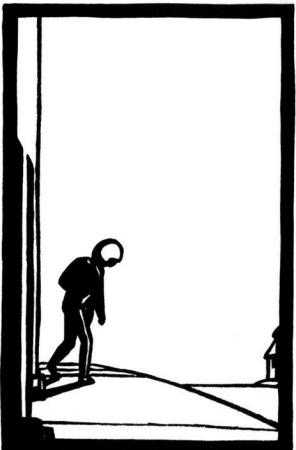
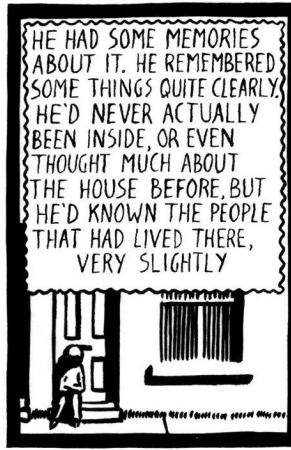
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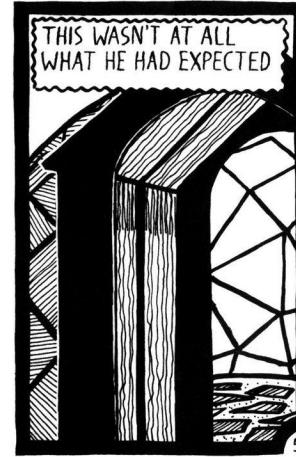
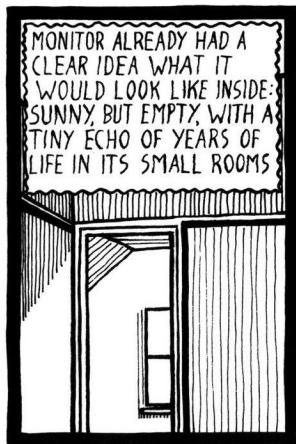
MONITOR'S HUMAN REWARD

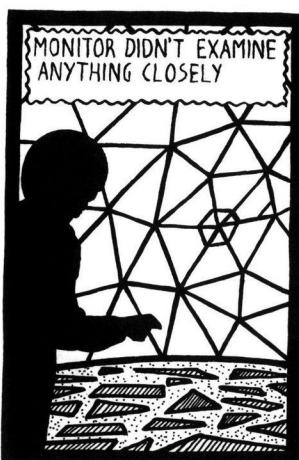
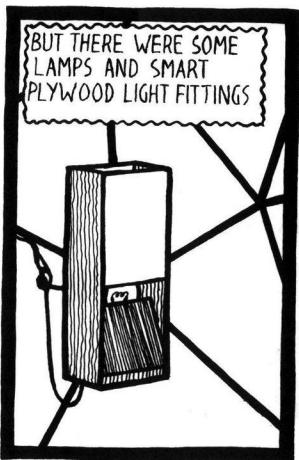
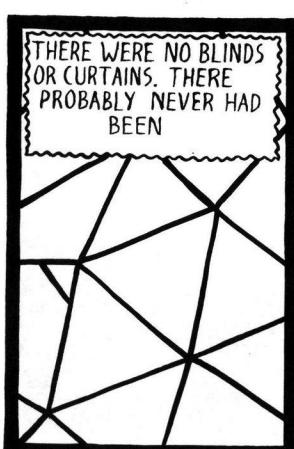
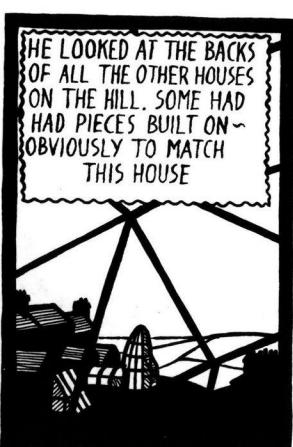
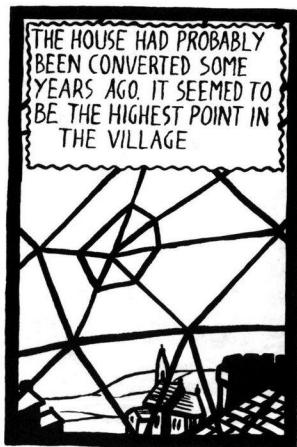


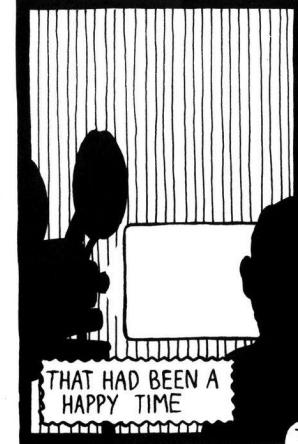
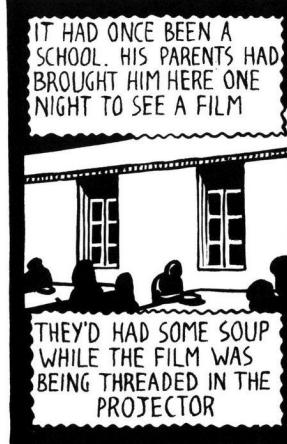
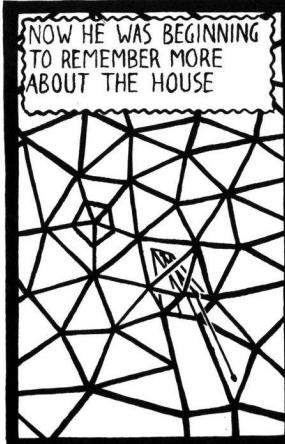
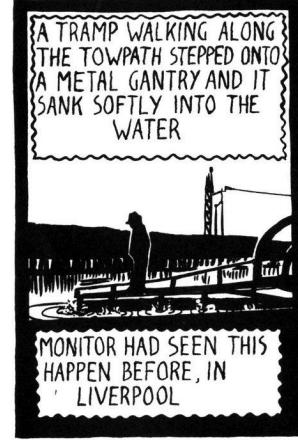
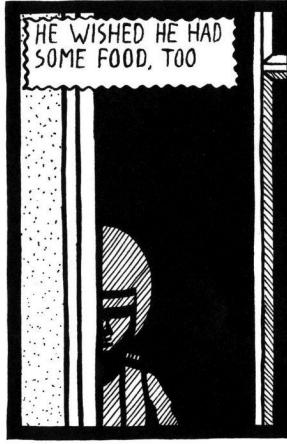
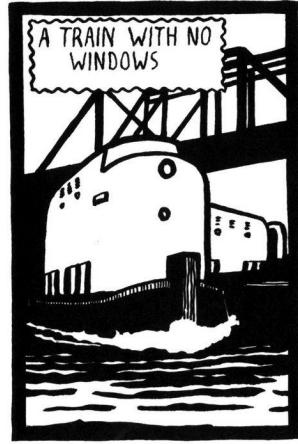
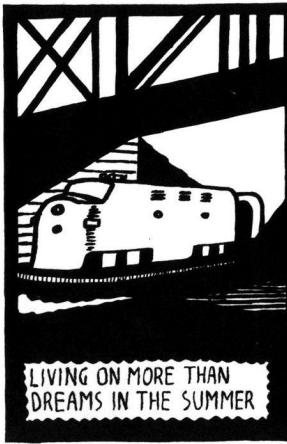












MONITOR KNEW NOW THAT HE NEED NEVER GO TO THE CAFE AGAIN, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS SO CLOSE



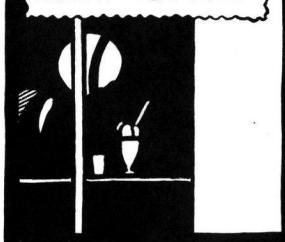
BUT HE WOULD HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT IF HE EVER DID GO THERE AGAIN, HE WOULD HAVE TO APOLOGISE FOR HAVING GIVEN UP HIS JOB WITHOUT NOTICE



ACTUALLY, THE OLD LADY WOULD BE PLEASED TO SEE HIM



AND HE MIGHT WORK IN THE CAFE FOR SEVERAL MORE MONTHS BEFORE SUCCESSFULLY APPLYING FOR A JOB IN ADVERTISING IN A TOWN SEVENTY MILES AWAY



THE OLD LADY DIED A SHORT TIME AFTERWARD



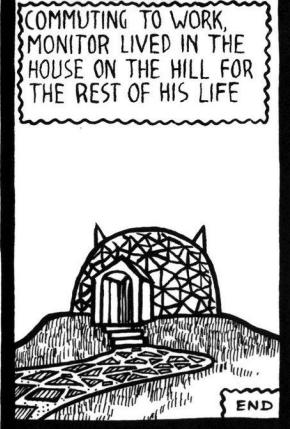
HER NEPHEW INHERITED THE CAFE AND SOLD IT



MONITOR WAS MENTIONED IN THE WILL, AND WAS TOLD THAT THE OLD LADY HAD THOUGHT HE WAS THE BEST CAFE ASSISTANT SHE HAD EVER HAD

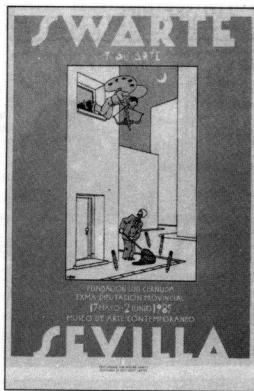


COMMUTING TO WORK, MONITOR LIVED IN THE HOUSE ON THE HILL FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE

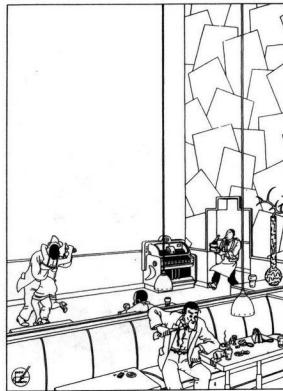


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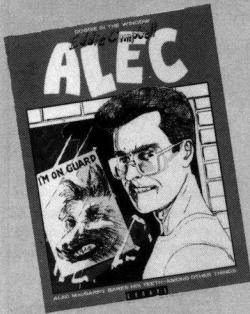
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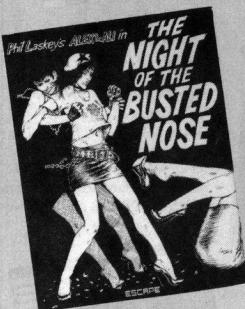
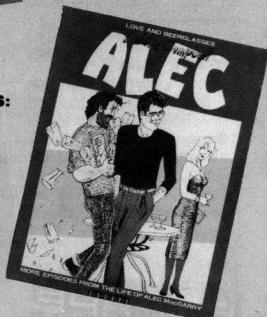
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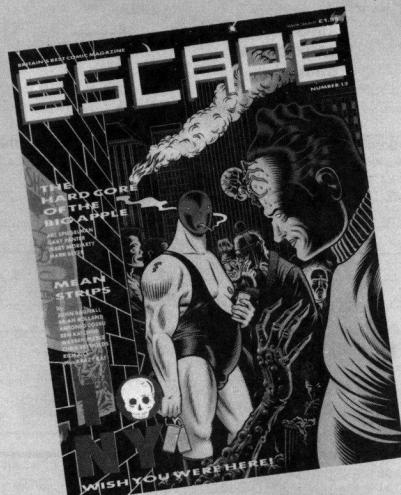
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4. _____
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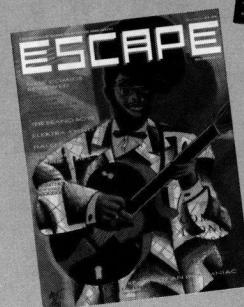
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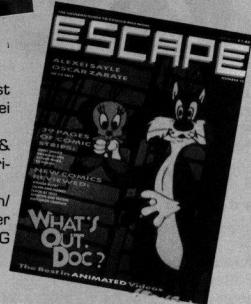
ISSUE TEN: □

Muñoz & Sampayo 20-page Drama/ Robert Williams Interview/Tintin/Eddie Campbell/ Steve Bell/2000AD/Shaky Kane/Alan Moore on Maus/ John Bagnall/Plus New Comics Reviewed/Cover by José Muñoz. 64 BIG pages,



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Comic Iconoclasm: Free Comics in Art 16-page Extra/Lorenzo Mattotti/ Halo Jones/Bill Sienkiewicz/ Baxendale & Reid—The Beano Boys/Brian Bolland/ New Alec/Ed Pinset/Badger Tales/Penthra. Cover by Mattotti. 72 BIG pages.



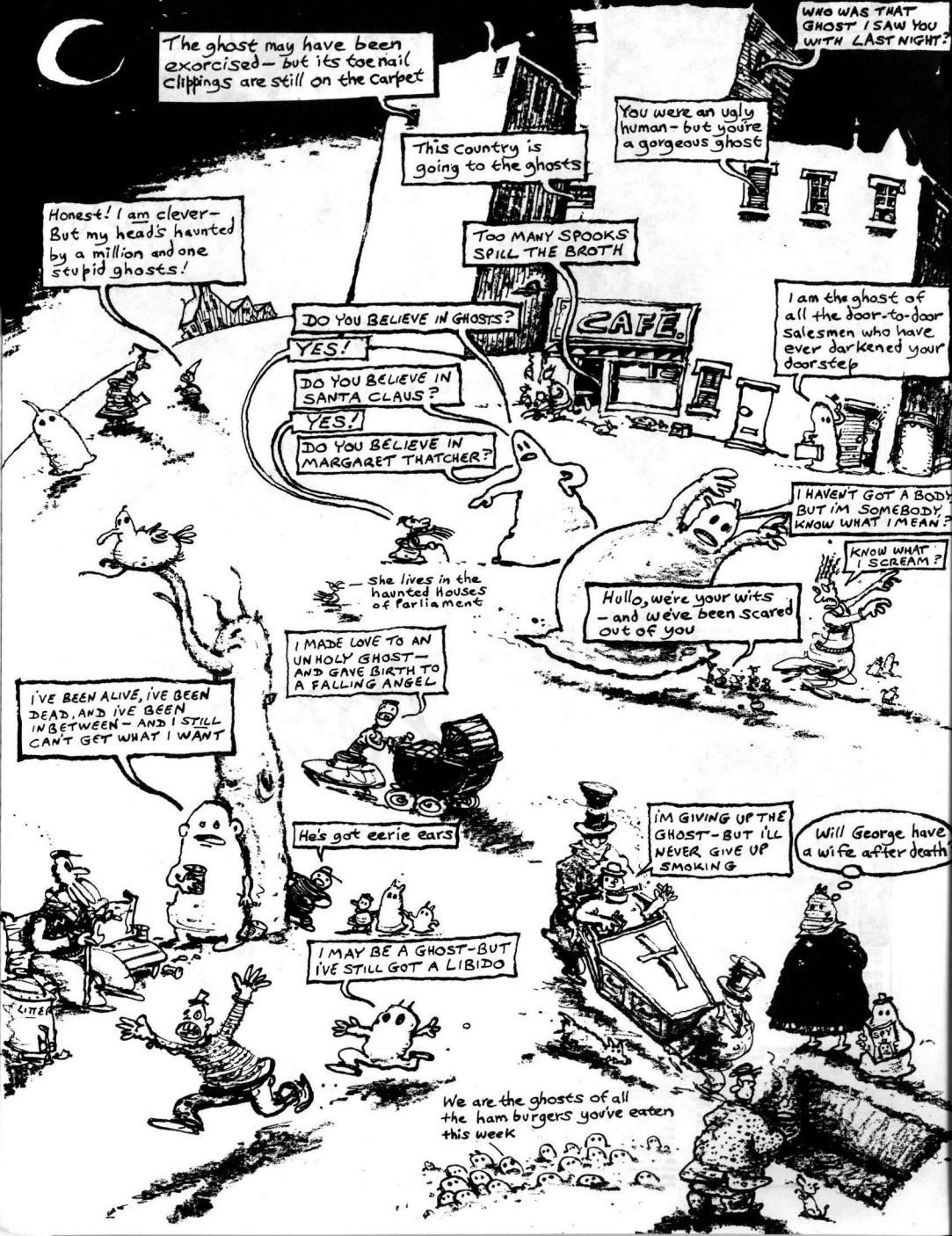
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What's Out, Doc?: The Best in Animated Videos/ Alexei Sayle Interview/ Joost Swarte/ Schuiten & Peeters/ Savage Pencil/ Primitif/ Winsor McCay/ Nicaragua/ Neville Smith/ Flock/ Krazy Kat/ Sylvester & Tweety Pie Cover. 68 BIG pages.

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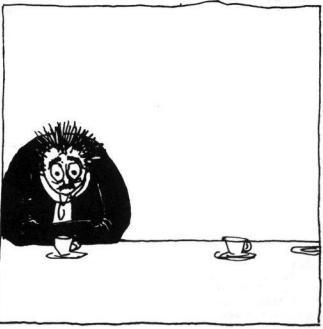
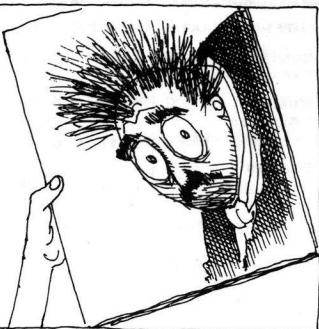
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THE PORTRAIT

BOLLAND 87



HIP PARADE

The first number tells the position of the entry this issue; the second its position last issue; the third is the number of previous issues in which the entry has appeared. The Fickle Finger of Fate identifies entries new to the Hip Parade.



★ 1-20 MAUS 2

Art Spiegelman, Pantheon, Penguin and Andre Deutsch

▲ 2-3 LOS BROS HERNANDEZ 5

Jamie's Love and Rockets and Gilbert's Heartbreak Soup, Fantagraphics and Titan

▲ 3 MARSHAL LAW 4

Pat Mills & Kevin O'Neill, Epic

▲ 4-13 GLENN DAKIN 4

Paris Man of Plaster, Harrier

▲ 5 HELLBLAZER 4

Jamie Delano & John Ridgeway, DC

▼ 6-4 HUNT EMERSON 5

Outrageous Tales, Knockabout

▲ 7-24 MILLIGAN & McCARTHY 2

Paradox, Vortex

▲ 8-15 VIZ 4

The Big Hard Ones

▼ 9-1 WATCHMEN 4

Moore & Gibbons, DC and Titan

▼ 10-2 KRAZY KAT 5

George Herriman

▲ 11-13 STEVE BELL 4

If, The Guardian

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ZIP UP! IT'S MARSHAL LAW, SAN FUTURO'S TOP CAPE CATCHER

▼ 19-6 ROBERT CRUMB

From Zap! to Hup!

4

▲ 20 JOHN BAGNALL

Escape and Ginchy Gazette

2

▼ 21-10 BILL SIENKIEWICZ

Elektra, Epic and The Shadow, DC

3

▲ 22 DOONESBURY

Garry Trudeau in The Guardian

3

▲ 23 LUTHER ARKWRIGHT

Bryan Talbot, Valkyrie Press

1

▲ 24 MARK BEYER

Agony, Raw and Pantheon

1

▼ 25-11 MOEBIUS

From Ar-Zach to Aedenia, Epic and Titan

2

▲ 26-30 SAVAGE PENCIL

The Satanick Scrawler

2

▲ 27 BRIAN BOLLAND

Mr Mamoulian, Escape

1

▲ 28 TEX AVERY

The King of Kartoonery

1

▲ 29 BOB LYNCH

Sav Sadness and The Lynch Mob, Eclipse

1

▲ 30 MAI THE PSYCHIC GIRL

'Carrie' Manga by Kudo & Kegami, Eclipse

1

BEST IN ISSUE

Here are the top five favourite strips from last issue. Voted for by ESCAPE readers. Be sure and tell us which strips in this issue you like the most.

1 Primitif

Ed Pinsent

2 Jason & Cindy

John Bagnall

3 Ahora Somos Libres

Woodcock & Derbyshire

4 Mr Mamoulian

Brian Bolland

5 No How, Yes How

Joost Swarte

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Are you one of those five SKP nuts who have won a copy of the **MGM CARTOON FESTIVAL** video, just bulging with Tex Avery eyeballs? Find out now... Congratulations to: David Charter, Bournemouth; Mike Hales, Crawley; Michael Mellor, Elland; John Porter, Leicester; Bibi Rae, Redcar.





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Bryan Talbot, creator of 'The Adventures of Luther Arkwright' and Eagle Award winning 'Nemesis' artist will be signing copies of his work at the following venues:

- 16 Mar 7.30 pm. **Exeter Uni Comics Group**, Nelson Mandela Room, Devonshire House, Exeter University.
- 18 Mar, 5.00 pm. **Timeslip**, 17 Prudhoe Place, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
- 19 Mar, 12.30 pm. **Science-Fiction Bookshop**, 40 Westcrosscauseway, Edinburgh
- 19 Mar, 4.00 pm. **A.K.A. Books & Comics**, 33 Virginia St., Glasgow.
- 25 Mar, 4.00 pm. **Nostalgia & Comics**, 14-16 Smallbrook Queensway, Birmingham.
- 26 Mar, 11.00 am. **Nostalgia & Comics**, 129 Middlewalk, Broadmarsh Shopping Centre, Nottingham.
- 26 Mar, 3.00 pm. **Nostalgia & Comics**, Zodiac at Redgate, Furnival Gate, Sheffield.
- 2 & 3 April **Follycon**, (Science Fiction Eastercon), Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool.
- 2 April, 4.00 pm. **Chapter One**, 6 London Road, Liverpool.
- 7 April, 8.00 pm. **Warrington S-F Group**, The Wheatsheaf, Orford Lane, Warrington.
- 9 April, 11.00 am. **Fantasyworld**, 10 Market Sq. Arcade, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent.
- 9 April, 3.00 pm. **Another World**, 23 Silver St., Leicester.
- 13 April, 12.30 pm. **Sweetens Bookshop**, 48 Fishergate, Preston.
- 13 April, 8.30 pm. **Preston S.F. Group**, Upstairs Room, The Stanley, Lancaster Road, Preston.
- 16 April, 11.00 am. **Odyssey**, Unit 6, Harrison St., off Vicar Lane, Leeds.
- 16 April, 3.00 pm. **Odyssey 7**, Manchester University Precinct, Oxford Rd., Manchester.
- 22 April, 4.00 pm. **Forever People**, 35 Park St., Bristol.
- 23 April, 11.00 am. **The Comic Zone**, 14 Harris Arcade, Station Rd., Reading.
- 23 April, 3.00 pm. **Forbidden Planet**, 23 Denmark St., London.
- 30 April, 1.00 pm. **Thunder Road Comics**, New Leaf Bookshop, 23 Bridge St., County Down, N. Ireland.
- 2 May, 1.00 pm. **Thunderbooks**, 332 Lytham Rd., South Shore, Blackpool.
- 6 May, 4.00 pm. **House on the Borderland**, 107B Cromwell Rd., Peterborough.
- 7 May, 1.00 pm. **American Comic Enterprise**, 6 Museum St., Colchester.

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